BRITAIN'S BESTSELLING MAGAZINE FOR C64 — AND AMIGA — GAMES!

A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
No.61 MAY 1990
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ZZAP! C64 AMIGA

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TURRICAN

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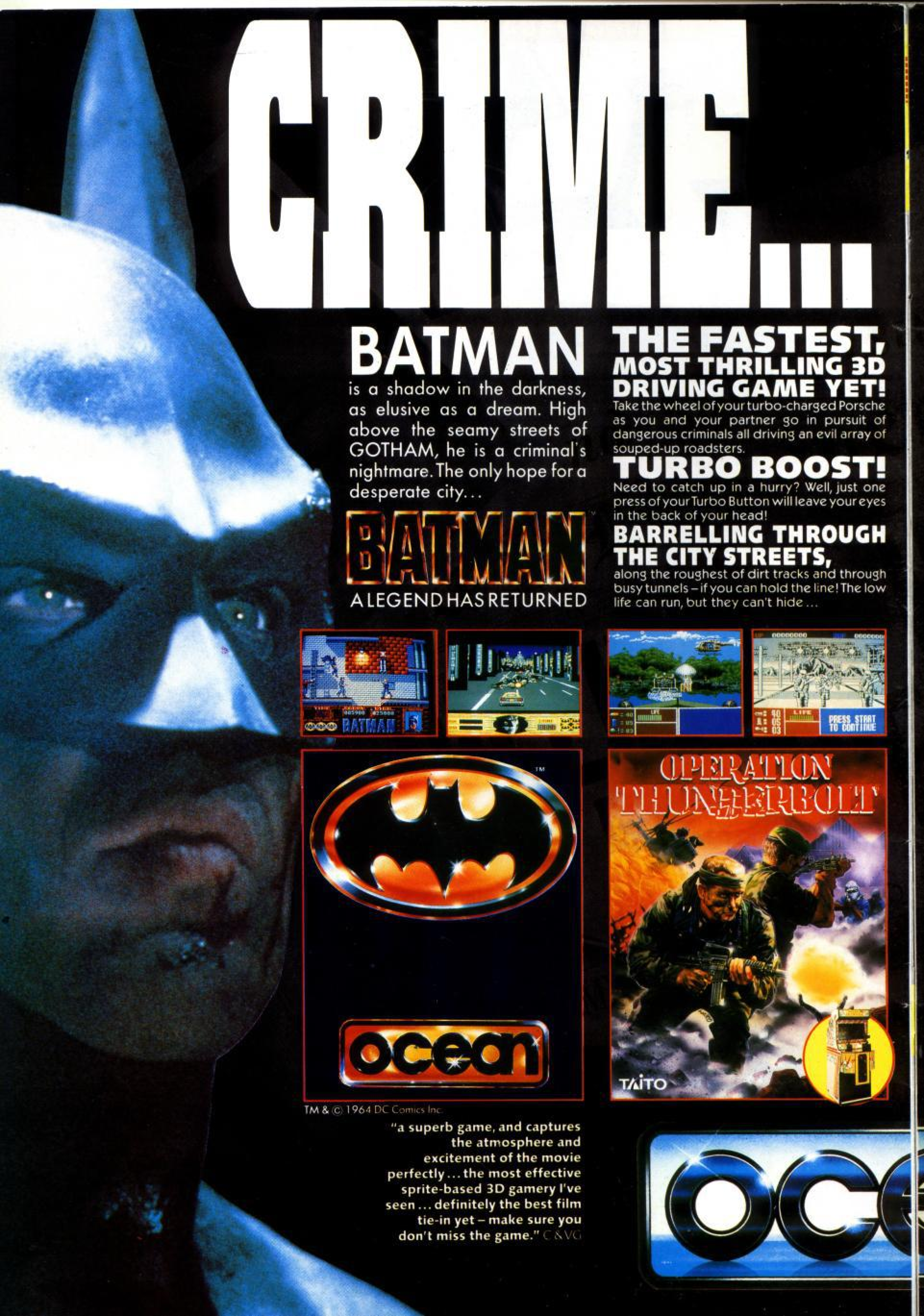
TWO

COMPLETE, SIZZLING SHOOT-'EM-UPS ON YOUR MEGATAPE!

MUTANTS (OCEAN)
SANXION (THALAMUS)

SOMETHING RECTANGULAR AND CRUCIAL MISSING?

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BATMAN
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BARRELLING THROUGH THE CITY STREETS,
along the roughest of dirt tracks and through busy tunnels – if you can hold the line! The low life can run, but they can't hide...
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ocean
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or the bulletproof vest, but watch out for

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Operation Thunderbolt the incredible Taito coin-op conversion brought NOW to your home computer.

SIX INSPIRED

action sequences put you in control of Elliot Ness's elite squad of crime-busters.

ALLEYWAY SHOOTOUTS, THE BORDER RAID,

The Railway Station confrontation and Warehouse bust culminating in the thrilling denoue ment of a

ROOFTOP DUEL

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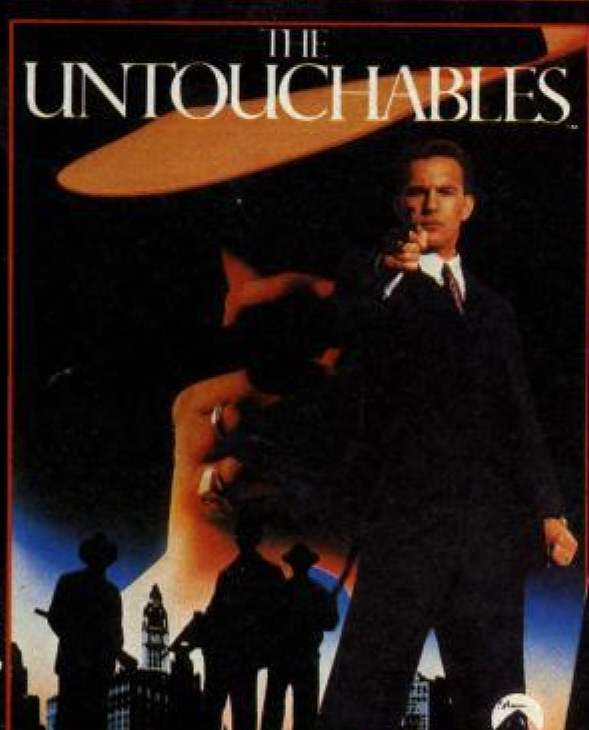












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ocean

"a fine example of how to do the job properly . . a cracking conversion . . . easily one of the most successful licences to date" Sinclair User

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MODERN LAND COMBAT VOL. I
Screenshots from various formats
U.S. Gold Ltd, Units 2/3 Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX. Tel: 021 625 3388.

MAY 1990
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ISSUE No. 61



This is jam hot!

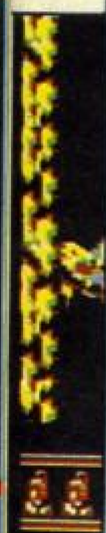
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ROVING REGULARS

FIRING FEATURES





GYROSCOPE GAMES



KILLING KOMP

REVIEWS
Reviewz

THE MAY CHARTS

C64 *Turbo Out Run* leaves the others at the starting grid, polling twice as many votes as the number 2 game (*Batman: The Movie*) and nearly three times as many as stable mate US Gold game *Ghouls 'N' Ghosts*. Otherwise it's business as usual with the Amiga charts changing very little as nothing new enters the battle. What no *Bomber*?

***Turbo Out Run* also stays at the top of the C64 music charts with *Ghouls* being the nearest challenger. The rest just don't come close. Both the Amiga music and coin-op charts are jammed solid with no leeway given to any title, bar *Hard Drivin'* making way for *Operation Thunderbolt* in the coin-op charts. Ho hum.**

This month's £20 software voucher winner is John Darren Russell of Thoney Close, Sunderland. Congrats, John.

Don't miss the boat, send us your votes. The NEW address is: *ZZAP! Charts, Stalag ZZAP!, Newsfield, The Case Mills, Temeside, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1JW.* You'll be in with the chance to win BIG MONEY (well, £20 anyway!).

TOP 10 C64 GAMES

1.	Turbo Out Run	(US Gold)
2.	Batman: The Movie	(Ocean)
3.	Ghouls 'N' Ghosts	(Capcom/US Gold)
4.	Stunt Car Racer	(MicroStyle)
5.	Myth	(System 3)
6.	Power Drift	(Activision)
7.	The Untouchables	(Ocean)
8.	Space Rogue	(Origin/Mindscape)
9.	Retrograde	(Thalamus)
10.	MicroProse Soccer	(MicroProse)

TOP 10 AMIGA GAMES

1.	Operation Thunderbolt	(Ocean)
2.	Batman: The Movie	(Ocean)
3.	Kick Off	(Anco)
4.	F-29 Retaliator	(Ocean)
5.	Strider	(Capcom/US Gold)
6.	Sim City	(Infogrames)
7.	Blood Money	(Psygnosis)
8.	Xenon 2	(Mirrorsoft)
9.	North And South	(Infogrames)
10.	Atron 5000	(Players)

C64 MUSIC

1.	Turbo Out Run	(Maniacs Of Noise)
2.	Ghouls 'N' Ghosts	(Tim Follin)
3.	The Untouchables	(Matthew Cannon)
4.	Batman: The Movie	(Matthew Cannon)
5.	Citadel	(Martin Walker)

AMIGA MUSIC

1.	Xenon 2	(David Whittaker)
2.	Ghouls 'N' Ghosts	(Tim Follin)
3.	Batman: The Movie	(Jonathan Dunn)
4.	Double Dragon 2	(Tomas Dahlgren/S Barratt/R Aplin)
5.	LED Storm	(Tim Follin/Mike Follin)

COIN-OPS

1.	Afterburner	(Sega)
2.	Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles	(Konami)
3.	Chase HQ	(Taito)
4.	STUN Runner	(Atari)
5.	Operation Thunderbolt	(Taito)

FUSED HIT BIG TIME!

The amazingly something 'Fused' look set to achieve their heart's desire: international fame, teenybopper adoration, and lots of money due to a great break just six months after forming. The group consists of ZZAP!'s Da Vinci, art director Mark Kendrick, TGM staff writer Robin Candy, plus lots of computers and sequencers (the talented bits).

The group's first break was Phil King's ZZAP! review of their concert, and now they've been selected to play support for top ten hit house masters – 808 State. The two groups are appearing at the Lunar Dance, Oakengates Town Hall, Telford, Shropshire on 20th April 1990. 'Let the Wild Rumpus start: Moon Madness in Telford, Dance and Rave with Lunar Energy.' Tickets are £10 in advance (Oakengates Box Office: 0952 619020 – Access & Visa), £12 on the night, and £25 from Markie.

Look out for the ZZAP! review soon, and remember we on ZZAP! were always their greatest friends.

STOP PRESS!

Thalamus's arcade puzzle game *Quedex* has been out for some time in the US as *Mindroll*, retitled by US publisher Epyx. The Yanks have also produced an Amiga conversion, now available here with Thalamus packaging, but retaining the American *Mindroll* title! Confusing, huh? but the price is straightforward enough – £19.99.

Back To The Future

To some in the software industry C64 cartridges seem a step back, rather than forward. After all the medium is expensive, takes time to manufacture, and everyone remembers the zillion or so ET cartridges Atari are rumoured to have buried somewhere in the Nevada desert along with their domination of the US console market.

But cartridges not only offer instant loading – a great boon in the multiload era – they allow publishers to make available games only previously available on disk due to the need for near constant data accessing (ie *Space Rogue, Project Firestart*). Given that the price of a C64 and sluggish disk drive rivals that of an ST, cartridge software offers a great shot in the arm to the C64's software potential. Games written for tape and disk could have substantial improvements on cartridge, making a slightly higher price acceptable.

Of course, the talk of cartridge still remains conjecture until Commodore finally announce their plans – if there really are any. But after several years overshadowed by the Amiga, at last the C64 stands on the brink of enjoying a considerable technical boost. That the means is comparatively old, should not detract from its great potential, immunity to piracy, and relative cheapness. It could succeed, and it makes the pseudo-CD ROM systems look sadly lacking in everything other than memory space which is unlikely to be used for anything other than compilations. We sincerely hope if Commodore does make the gamble, software houses – and consumers – will provide the essential support.

SICK ED SEWN UP

Amazing microsurgery by famed surgeon, Prof N Nutz, has been performed on the bisected body of ZZAP! Editor, Stuart Wynne. The success or failure of the operation is still in doubt, especially as the Geek was helping out with his grandmother's thimble and whalebone needle. In the meantime the Scorelord – who is totally and absolutely innocent of the Ed's attempted murder – is so enjoying writing reviews he may well continue. But what will the readers think?

VIRUS SHOCK

Last month's hasty preview of the amazing C64 *Virus* proved to be a little inaccurate, with the real release date set months not weeks in the future. Rather than using solid 3-D like the Amiga game, the unique C64 conversion uses several million hand-drawn screens to represent all possible movements of the ship – after each joystick movement the relevant screen is loaded in to provide an unusual impression of speed. Programmer David Doll **promises a review copy for early April next year.**

ZZAP! MEGATAPE 6 IS HERE!

What you want, is what you get with your friendly neighbourhood, listening magazine – ZZAP! 64/Amiga. As soon the results of President Stu's Poll came flooding in, we knew it there was a vast majority for another Megatape. The Scorelord immediately began phoning up software people and making offers they could not refuse – ie give us all your games or I'll have you beamed up on my spaceship and deposited on Mercury without a spacesuit!

First to succumb to a sudden fit of generosity was Dave Birch of Thalamus – the software house which brought you *Retrograde, Armalyte, Hawkeye, and Sanxion.* The most consistent producer of mindblowing shoot-'em-ups incredibly offered the Sizzling *Sanxion* for the tape. This was the debut product of Finnish programming genius Stavros Fasoulas and met with instant acclaim from the ZZAP! team, earning 93% and a well deserved Sizzler. A horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up with a novel overhead view radar scanner, *Sanxion* was described by Julian Rignall as 'one of the most impressive and playable shoot-'em-ups I've seen'.

The second software person to offer a game was Pam Griffiths of the astoundingly successful Ocean, which with the help of a brace of Sizzlers and Gold Medals, has grabbed almost a third of software sales. The massive Mancunian conglomerate has a long history extending from *Daley Thompson's Decathlon* to *F-29 Retaliator.* Currently dominating the charts with the brilliant *Rainbow Islands, Batman: The Movie*, and evergreen *RoboCop* Ocean enjoy the enviable position of massive commercial and critical success. A shining part of their history was the link with programmers' *Denton Designs*, who produced the 'unusual, visually stimulating and highly entertaining shoot-'em-up' *Mutants.* Julian Rignall (again!) called it 'an essential purchase' and it won a Sizzler with 90%.

Full instructions for both games are on pages 27-28.

After such an amazing, double A-side shoot-'em-up spectacular Megatape, the only question is what can ZZAP! provide for the next Megatape? The Scorelord is already applying his unique pressure to the software houses, and rumours abound of an even more amazing Megatape on the very next issue. One thing's for sure, ZZAP! 62 is going to be a complete sell-out so you better make sure you get your copy!



▲ Thalamus' fantastic Sizzler shoot-'em-up, *Sanxion.*



▲ One of the many varied levels in Ocean's *Mutants*, a Sizzler requiring some careful tactics!

FREE GAMES

The wackily named European Electronic Zoo company, previously best known for distributing games such as InnerPrise's *Battle Squadron*, have stepped into the hardware business with an external Amiga drive. A mere £99, it comes equipped with an on/off switch (cor!) and a long connecting lead! It's 'fully compatible with the Commodore 1010 drive' and comes in a pack with five games. Funnily enough none of them require an external drive and are, perhaps inevitably, all a bit dated. For the record they're *Impact, Exolon, Super Huey, Goldrunner*, and *Leatherneck.*

Telephone (0453) 887008 for more details.

RAINBOW ISLANDS TREASURE

Over six months after ZZAP! first reviewed the C64 and Amiga conversions of the Taito coin-op hit, *Rainbow Islands*, Ocean have finally got the games into the shops. And after heavy play of both versions we'd not only like to remind you of the original marks (92% each), but suggest we were a bit mean and a Gold Medal might have been required. Both versions pack in an amazing amount of arcade playability, graphic genius, and incredible hookability – so much so our ailing Editor managed to clock up 2,334,960 in the Ludlow hospice! Highly recommended – the games that is, not the Ed!

OOPS DEPARTMENT!

The Satanic film planning department – led by Antichrist Matthew Uffindell – struck again last week, printing a photo of Palace's *Barbarian* with a review of Psygnosis's *Barbarian*, mixing up some preview shots and, worst of all, reversing the picture of those wonderful Teque people so all the names were the wrong way around in the *Shadow Warriors* feature. Potential exorcists can apply to the usual address.

turrican

Rainbow Arts, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk

●A dream of a nightmare!



▲ After picking up a jetpack, Turrican floats upwards through a vertically scrolling level.

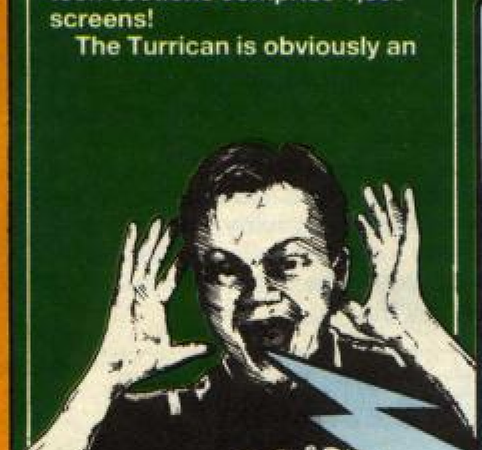


▲ Aw, this alien has nobody – but don't feel pity; he's got a pretty mean headbutt!

You may think all your fears and nightmares were caused by exams, and eating cheese late at night. In fact, it's all due the three-headed monster Morgul. Many millennia ago he was banished to another dimension by the heroic Devolon, but now the demon is beginning to escape his prison. As a result fear and terror are on the increase and most people hardly dare walk the streets! Only one man is brave enough to take on the monster responsible – and it's not Michael Heseltine. No, it's you – the Turrican!

Armed with the very latest in hi-tech baddie-blasters you're sent off to Morgul's dreaded kingdom. The land is split into five levels, three of which have three sections, and two have just two sections. These thirteen sections comprise 1,300 screens!

The Turrican is obviously an



Absolutely brilliant! I thought I might have to wait a few years at least for something to beat *Retrograde*. I just can't get over how massive each stupendous level is. Not only is there great variety across the 13 levels, but within each load there's an amazing amount of diversity which makes progress utterly compelling. I can't get over just how massive this game is; each level is simply HUGE and I can't wait to see the inevitable maps for it (I may well have to dedicate a good few entire tips sections to this game). The amount of frustration when people sadly lacking our cheat version are unable to get onto another super-brilliant level will be incredible. You simply won't be able to put this game down. Level 3-1, when you abruptly find the screen scrolling vertically for some shoot-'em-up action, is stunning. And the end-of-level baddies are gorgeous. The fish is massive and moves as smoothly as you'd expect of an Amiga – if it wasn't our very own C64 I saw it on, I'd be convinced the host machine had a blitter in it!

Then there's the weapons, the power beam is not only pretty but an extremely useful weapon although it can't cut through the scenery – so things are never too easy! The mines, grenades and gyroscope transformation are great too, leaving you plenty of room to develop your own tactics. To sum up, *Turrican* is the sort of game you expect to find in the arcades. A worthy successor to the *Nemesis* series in fact, and you can't get a bigger compliment than that from me!



▲ Turrican uses his laser to fend off one of Ken's more vicious relatives.

action-packed guy: he can duck, jump, lay mines, throw grenades, and even transform into a spinning gyroscope which can zoom through small gaps.

Pressing fire briefly causes either the laser or machine-gun to fire – depending which you have. By holding down the fire button you can activate a lightning bolt; this can be swung 360° around the player to slice'n'dice just about anything. Collecting icons can extend its length to cover the whole screen! Even more formidable are the energy lines; tapping the 'space bar' sends these out with smart-bomb effect. If you die, any power-ups you've collected are lost, but all the special devices – such as grenades, energy lines etc – are reset to three of each. You can collect more though.

You also begin the game with three lives and three continue-plays – the latter can be increased by collecting 300 diamonds! And you certainly need them with 50 different aliens, 'tons' of bonus levels, and absolutely massive end-of-section monsters.



Rainbow Arts' Nikki Hemming earthling promised this was one of the best C64 games ever, a claim which almost had me laughing when it was first started. A nicely animated Turrican hopping up a few hills against a bland background seemed rather dull. But then Nikki showed us the waterfalls, the beautifully swirling water pools, the fearsome lightning weapon, shimmering diamonds, and ever more impressive backgrounds. The variety on just the first section was amazing, but then we saw the clenched fist end-of-section monster – huge and moving really fast. Mediocre really, when compared to the dazzling fish monster, fantastically well-detailed and just as fast moving. Then there's the brilliant Giger-style world, with astonishingly good background graphics and *Alien* face-huggers crawling about – just like home really. *Turrican* is quite clearly a masterpiece of graphic genius, but what about gameplay?

1300 screens make for one massive, maze-like challenge combined with an awesome shoot-'em-up. A good memory for a route will be useless, however, unless you have the brain to use the lightning to uncover concealed exits and the skill to take on a horrendous array of baddies. Once again all the whinging about the C64's demise is shown up as pathetic drivel. *Turrican* is an absolutely awesome experience, developed specifically for the C64 and although there will be conversions I doubt if any will match the original's sheer artistry. Forget Morgul, *Turrican* is the legend which is going to haunt your fevered nightmares for months to come. Absolutely irresistible!

▼ Transforming into gyroscope form allows Turrican to rapidly roll around the 13000 screens.



I'm speechless . . . Erm, yes well I suppose I'd better say something! But what can I say that the others haven't said already? *Turrican* is simply stunning with some of the most gorgeous graphics ever to grace the 64. The levels have great atmosphere with superbly detailed backgrounds and varied enemies lurking round every corner. And as for the end-of-level monsters, they're huge, imaginatively designed, and incredibly fast-moving – you've got to see 'em to believe 'em!

Of course graphics alone don't make a game, but *Turrican* certainly isn't deficient in the gameplay department either. The various weapons add an extra twist to the excellent arcade action: learning out how to use them best is a fascinating process. The gyroscope is particularly innovative (and useful), realistically rolling around the play area and bouncing off walls. And the grenades are a great idea as you have to throw them at something solid for them to explode.

Overall, *Turrican* is good enough to eat, but if I scoffed the disk I wouldn't be able to play it – looks like I'll be going hungry for a while!

amiga

Amiga owners should have only a month to wait to discover the delights of *Turrican*.

update

PRESENTATION 90%
Great packaging, three continue-plays which can be increased, and good end-screen.

GRAPHICS 97%
13 levels packed with variety, detail, imagination, and some unbelievable end-of-level baddies – who's given the C64 a blitter?

SOUND 90%
Two rousing tunes within the game, with some levels restricted to spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 94%
Very easy into to get into, with a very nicely worked out control system.

LASTABILITY 98%
13 levels made up of a mere 1,300 screens (!) with great graphical variety and superb baddies.

OVERALL 97%
An utterly awesome shoot-'em-up with great variety in gameplay as well as the superlative graphics.

ZZAP! TEST

64 A

X-out

Rainbow Arts, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk; Amiga £19.99

Rainbow Arts have practically revolutionized the old extra-lives concept by offering you a range of ships to have in your 'fleet', each individually armed!

You begin the game in a shop with a hideous alien shopkeeper for whom shoplifting is never going to be a problem. His most expensive goods are four ships which can be fitted with 3–12 weapons. Once selected, a ship can be placed on the design grid where a number of weapons can be fitted. The basic (in-built) weapon is a gun for which you can choose from three strengths of bullet, firing in up to three directions. There's also three types of guided missiles, plus bouncing and smart bombs. Up to six drones can be released, firing automatically, and re-collected. Even more impressive are the satellites; eight types moving in different patterns.

The most graphically awesome weapons are the superweapons – Fireclaw, Flamethrower and Energywall – activated by holding down fire. Between each multiloaded level you return to the shop where you can uprate your ships, and even buy new ones if you have the cash!



While sharing the Welshman's disappointment with the overly familiar alien attack patterns, I thought the great weapons choice and technical excellence compensated. The graphic detail is superbly unpleasant, particularly on the end-of-level monsters. Working out how to deploy your weapons is really satisfying – when you get it right. C64 tape owners will find it initially painful: dying on level one means you have to reload the shop, high score table, and level before restarting. Very irritating until you start to make progress onto further levels where fast loading makes it no more painful than any other multiload. Buying new ships and weapons between levels then becomes a welcome respite between the action, and a chance to work out new tactics – although maybe a bit too much money is offered. Definitely recommended if you fancy something a bit novel.



▲ **This ship is equipped with three homing satellites (above and to the right of it).** (Amiga)



The most impressive thing about *X-Out* are the weapons – you can easily spend hours, even days getting the hang of them. Choosing how your satellites will move, and where to place them and drones is great. And working out which ship to arm how provides great tactical depth. Another good idea is how you can swap between two secondary weapons.

It's a pity then that the game is otherwise a fairly conventional horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up. There's a few nice touches, such as the aliens which leave matter trails behind them (as in *R–Type*) and impressive mid-level and end-of-level baddies, but only the weapons are new. Still, on both formats presentation is first class with great graphics and good tunes – especially on the Amiga which so often suffers ST game clones. If you're a shoot-'em-up fanatic both versions are top notch, but the C64's already got a huge variety of similar games and *X-Out* needed more original baddies.

64

PRESENTATION 88%
Amazing intro which easily matches the Amiga's. Fast multiload, but reloading can be irritating.

GRAPHICS 89%
Some very good sprites, landscapes, mother aliens, and even parallax scrolling.

SOUND 83%
Good and varied tunes with nice FX.

HOOKABILITY 81%
Takes time to work out the weapons, and reloading a difficult level one and the shop can be irritating on tape.

LASTABILITY 83%
Eight levels provide a fairly substantial challenge.

OVERALL 82%
A first-class shoot-'em-up.

▼ **You'll need all your extra weapons (including the two drones in front of your ship) to deal with this baddie.** (C64)



amiga

PRESENTATION 86%
Great intro, attractive shop scene, good instructions.

GRAPHICS 90%
Some beautifully detailed sprites and landscapes, all designed specifically for the Amiga.

SOUND 90%
A great soundtrack, different tunes for each level with some very good spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 82%
A little difficult to begin with, and it takes a while to get the hang of the weapons.

LASTABILITY 86%
Eight varied levels with some great mother aliens providing an incentive to keep going.

OVERALL 84%
An extremely slick and quite innovative shoot-'em-up.



FREE
VENDETTA
WATCH OFFER
LIMITED EDITION
VENDETTA
SYSTEM . 3
Mission...Best Original Products...STOP
Objective...Prepare Your Players For The Ultimate Experience To Come...STOP
Possible Outcome...BLOW THEIR MINDS...STOP
ACE
'What you get in Vendetta is 2 game types in one. It is at this point you begin to wonder if your C.64 hasn't metamorphasised into an Amiga overnight. Yes the graphics are that impressive.'
Ace
'A Superb Combination of 2 perfectly integrated game types. Not only is there a top Notch Road effect. There's combat as well. Quite simply an amazing Product.'
Zapp '64
'With its blend of Arcade and Strategic Elements, Vendetta is one of the best games we have seen on the C.64.'
The Games Machine
C+VG HIT!
'An Action packed hunt for justice with so much blood and blasting it makes 'Last Ninja' look like a walk in the Park.'
C & VG
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ZZAP! TEST

SIZZLER

T.V. Sports FOOTBALL

Cinemaware/Mirrorsoft, C64 £19.99 (disk only)

●Hail Mary: it's been no rush release, but it certainly ain't gonna bomb!

Almost a year after the Amiga original appeared (90%, Issue 47) *TV Sports Football* has touched down on the C64. This gridiron sim includes most of the features of the original except the 'Team-mates' (two player vs computer) option, team and player statistics, and fumbles.

Mirroring America's NFL, the Cinemaware Football League has 28 teams contesting six divisions in the hope of reaching the play-offs, and ultimately the Cinemaware Bowl. At the start of the season, any team can be edited to alter the players' names and abilities (speed, strength, handling, agility) and change team ownership – making it computer or human controlled. Changes are saved onto a blank disk which is also used for saved games.

Both league and exhibition (friendly?!) matches start with the coin toss – the winners choose whether to kick or receive the ball at the automatically-taken kick off.

Before each play the playcalling screen appears, allowing both offence and defence to select from a variety of plays, using a combination of two joystick moves to choose the formation and the way the offensive players will run (shown by tactical diagrams)/defence will behave (blitz, or prepare for pass or inside/outside run.) To add extra variety, the mirror image of any offensive play can be selected by pressing fire with the relevant direction.

After both players have selected, it's onto the scrolling, overhead-view field for the play. Before the snap (start of the play), the positions and assignments of defensive players can be altered (blitz or man-to-man). The ball can be snapped by the offence in one of two ways: pressing fire causes the quarterback to hand the ball to a running back at the earliest opportunity.

Alternatively, pull back on the joystick and the quarterback falls back a couple of yards, ready to make a pass. When he's in the throwing position, the quarterback can be rotated left/right to aim the pass. Holding down fire causes him to throw the ball, a cross gradually moving up the field to indicate where the ball will land – release fire to



American Football beats cricket for slowness, with apparently endless time-outs and a circuit-fusing degree of ridiculous complexity. But edited highlights make a convincing case for the drama hidden within, a great mix of action and tactical planning which Cinemaware have captured quite perfectly. The most amazing thing is the fast, slick animation of the beautifully detailed footballers themselves; it really is very close to the Amiga original and seems to me to play even faster. Combined with the superlative intro sequences, this graphical fineness goes a long way to getting even haters of the sport, such as myself, into the game. Planning which play to make, then actually executing it provides a compelling tactical/arcade game. I certainly enjoyed it, especially sending buffalo-like linebackers crashing into Phil's quarterback. At £20 with hour-long matches, there's no denying you need a degree of patience and determination to get the most of this complex product, but it's another great C64 game and an amazing conversion by Alien Technology Group – obviously a superior bunch of programmers!

▼ The quarterback is throwing a pass, the green cross shows where one of his team-mates needs to be to catch it to complete the pass and make some hefty yardage!





▲ The play-calling section, the diagrams show where your players run to – remember what you've got to do!

stop the cross. If a receiver is near enough he may catch the ball. However, care must be taken as the ball can also be intercepted by defensive players.

As soon as the ball is either handed off or successfully passed, the rusher/receiver will immediately start running upfield – you can take over his control by moving the joystick.

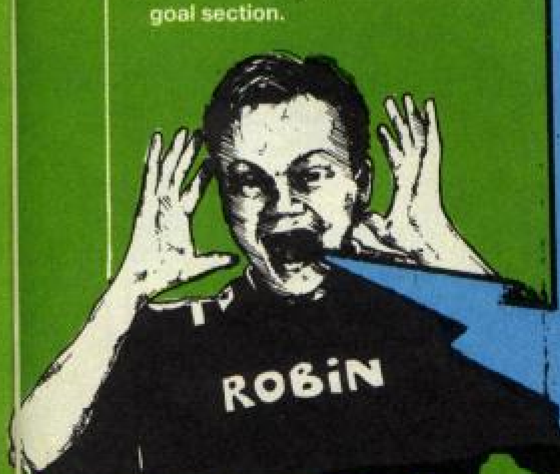
The offence gets four downs (plays) to advance the ball ten yards, in which case they get a first down and start the process all over again. However, if they don't make the distance the ball is turned over to the defence – so teams usually kick the ball upfield on fourth down. There are three ways of scoring points: a touchdown, field goal, or safety (tackling an offensive player in his own endzone). Field goal (and point-after-touchdown) attempts are viewed from behind the kicker and can be taken manually or automatically.




▲ The extremely impressive field goal section.

What an excellent conversion this is. The game plays almost identically to the Amiga version with a great variety of running and passing plays to choose from. Graphics are also very good with detailed player sprites moving surprisingly fast considering there's so much happening on the field. The overhead view is much clearer than the side-on one used in *4th And Inches*, and gameplay is far superior with full control over the quarterback and, when the ball is passed/handed off, the receiver/rusher. My only minor niggle is that I couldn't get the quarterback to manually roll left/right and pitch the ball out to a running back (one of my favourite moves on the Amiga). This means that your opponent can't be fooled by a fake run before a pass (a 'play action'). But this is a minor flaw in an otherwise amazing conversion. Even though it lacks the original's graphical interludes and detailed statistics, *TV Sports Football* is by far the best American football sim on the 64, brilliantly combining arcade action and strategy. A must for any gridiron fan.





This puts the chronic ST version to shame! Both graphically and playwise it bears a much closer resemblance to the classic Amiga game. Okay, so some of the more razzmatazzy aspects are missing (especially cheerleaders, boo hoo!), but more importantly the excellent core of the game has been kept perfectly intact. Both strategy and arcade skills are tested to the full – you'll need both to beat some of the very intelligent computer teams – and the league offers an immense long-term challenge. The game is complex (just like the sport) and each match takes well over an hour – this certainly isn't a game you can pick up and play for a few minutes now and then. However, the reward of learning how to pass efficiently and intelligently choose plays is a huge sense of achievement. In fact *TV Sports Football* is an excellent introduction to the sport, as well as the most perfect conversion of the sport any existing gridiron fan could hope for.

PRESENTATION 91%
Typically excellent intro/outro scenes, save/load league options, good manuals and quick, albeit frequent disk access.

GRAPHICS 92%
Surprisingly fast and detailed game graphics give the Amiga version a run for its money! Plus impressive kicking sequence.

SOUND 82%
Quite a few good tunes, although once in play there's just minimalistic spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 88%
A bit daunting to begin with, considering the matches last an hour and US football is so complex. But there is a very good practice option and informative instructions.

LASTABILITY 94%
Winning a match is a formidable challenge, winning the league boggles the mind!

OVERALL 92%
The ultimate American Football sim has arrived on the C64. A must for fans!



CLOUD KINGDOMS

Logotron, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk; Amiga £24.99

If you never thought of yourself as a small, green-hued ball capable of rolling in eight different directions, now's your opportunity. But there's a reason why you're such a sickly colour: your magic balls have been nicked by a tiny, twisted oriental tree – Baron von Bonsai!

The Baron has used the your crystal balls to enslave the Fairies in Cloud Kingdoms, turning them into Bad Insect Monsters and Giant Rolling Blackballs. They drain your energy on contact and guard 15 kingdoms on the C64, 32 on the Amiga. When you start the game you have a choice of four kingdoms to begin with. On completing a level you return here, so you heve a choice of how to go through the game. Many levels contain tricky features such as trapdoors, icy floors, repelling pinball bumpers, and magnetic suction tiles.

The game is played against a weird time limit, the clock starting at 99 Manukas (each worth about four seconds) – the game's over when it reaches zero. Time can be put back by five Manukas by collecting a clock, and 20 Manukas by completing a kingdom. But ten Manukas are lost every time you drop down a hole or lose all your energy. You can also spend five Manukas resetting a level to its start position by pausing the game, then pressing 'R'.

Besides the clocks, there are Fizzy Pop Bottles to recharge your energy, Paint Pots to draw bridges under you while you move, Wings so you can fly over barriers, and Shields for invulnerability.

▼Now how do I get to that green diamond, maybe those wings will be useful . . . (Amiga)





Unlike many games where you merely repeat levels with different graphics, *Cloud Kingdoms* really forces you to develop a new tactical approach for each level. The Amiga version has quite a few more levels of course, but is more difficult which can lead to frustration. Still, there are some very attractive cartoon-style graphics, plus some good sonics.

The C64 version opens with some nice music and whirling star fields which really get you in the mood, and the in-game graphics keep you playing to see yet more of them. A more generous collision detection and fractionally slower gameplay add up to a thankfully easier game than the Amiga. Heartily recommended.



Why do I get the feeling that I've seen this sort of thing before? Probably because it smacks of *Quedex*. Although not as technically impressive, it's a lot more enjoyable with the hero having a lot of character about his bouncy self. The 64 version is a superbly crafted game with lots of wonderful shading and a host of different graphic styles.

I wasn't too impressed by the Amiga game although the graphic variety and attention to detail are worthy of note (a surprise to see that Dokk did the graphics). The fast scrolling ups the pace a bit too much for my liking. What's worse, the dodgy collision detection is pretty mean, making it a tad frustrating to play and nowhere near as fun as the C64 game.

64

PRESENTATION 72%
No multiload hassle, good cheat mode, pause, and handy reset option.

GRAPHICS 80%
Very good variety, nice shading, and attractive main sprite.

SOUND 70%
Good title tune but only adequate spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 79%
Surprisingly difficult first level, but there are three other levels to choose from.

LASTABILITY 80%
15 levels, a variety of routes to victory and a tough time limit. Easier gameplay makes it better to persist with.

OVERALL 80%
A well presented and addictive arcade-puzzle game.

amiga

PRESENTATION 62%
High score table, quit and pause option.

GRAPHICS 73%
Slick, with great cartoony feel. Very good for a puzzle game.

SOUND 74%
Reasonable title tune with some good spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 74%
Initially difficult, but you soon get the hang of it, and the ability to choice of four start levels is good.

LASTABILITY 70%
32 levels and various ways of getting through them makes a big challenge. Difficulty might discourage some players though.

OVERALL 72%
A fun, if pricey puzzle game.

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ZZAP! TEST

SIZZLER

castle master

Incentive/Domark, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk; Amiga £19.99

●Thwart the evil Magister, and rescue your brother or sister

In times gone by, there have been many who so disliked a wit's style under the baud-walk that they did call him names. Now this original soul, Mel Croucher was his birth name, has confirmed their worst fears by revealing himself as a foul fiend who takes children under his stinking coat to tell them terrible tales, in painful rhyme with lines such as 'when sabre-tooth made take-away of man' and spells like 'Bejasus betamax bedamned'. His tale concerns one of those ancient demons which storytellers presume roamed prehistoric earth. This demon, Magister, was a sleepy sort of spirit until a castle was built upon his resting place. Once Magister awakened he did seek vengeance, but was at first so weakened by his slumber that the king of the castle could humiliatingly throw him out.

Soon enough though, Magister regained his power and threw all the castle dwellers into a deep coma, creating hideous ghouls from their fevered dreams. But the Magister wasn't satisfied with this revenge; he sought to make the whole of humanity pay. So he did roam far from the castle, in a smelly coat to discomfort the victims he told tales before murdering. His latest outrage has been to kidnap one of the royal family – the prince or princess, depending on which sex you want to play as the rescuer.

You have twenty-four hours to find your twin, hidden in one of the castle's four towers, before he or she is forever turned into a ghost. But before you can free him/her you must also destroy all the spirits haunting the castle – their numbers are indicated by the spirit level. As not all the ghosts are so stupid as to jump out at you, a fair part of the game involves opening chests and suchlike to find the more cowardly ones. To help you, there are three potions and ten keys to be found. As with the other Freescape games, there's plenty of 3-D puzzles and traps to strain your tactics.



▲ Hoisting the flag inside stalag ZZAP! . . . whoops, I mean the castle! (C64)

I much preferred *Total Eclipse* to the previous Freescape games as the authentic period scenario gave it a believable atmosphere. The same applies to *Castle Master* only more so as the graphics are more sophisticated with detailed shading. Like the previous Freescape games, I prefer the 64 version as the simpler colour scheme is somehow more atmospheric. However both versions benefit from the exploratory freedom which allows you to roam the castle at will. This means puzzles are never frustrating as if you get stuck you can always go to another tower and approach the problem from another angle. On the sonic front, both versions are good with a continuous *Ghouls And Ghosts*-style tune, although personally I preferred the old *Dark Side* music. All in all though, *Castle Master* is another excellent Incentive product, with well thought-out puzzles and those great 3-D graphics.





▲ Not much of a congregation today, vicar . . . Vicar? Where are you?! (Amiga)

You begin the quest outside the castle, and must find a way to lower the drawbridge to avoid the shark-infested moat. You are armed with a slingshot, and can run, walk, crawl, look all around, and even read plaques on the walls – providing brief, cryptic clues. The layout and structure of the game is different for the C64 and Amiga, with the former having the emphasis on puzzles while the latter has a few more arcade bits. The game can be saved at any time.



Now you know what Stalag ZZAP! is like! Well almost: this castle's a lot bigger and much easier to roam around (lax security – tut, tut!). The puzzle gameplay is much less abstract (and hence more enjoyable) than the earlier SF games like *Driller*. The C64 game obviously can't match the Amiga's speed, the main problem is when you're under threat from a ghost and have to move fast – it's too easy to panic into pushing forward twice, say, instead of once. Practice soon puts this right, though, allowing you to fully appreciate this technically excellent product. All in all, for an utterly compelling quest which will take many weeks to complete, look no further!

I must say I was pleasantly surprised by this game. I've never really got into the previous Freescape games, and after the superlative graphics of *Infestation*, Amiga *Castle Master* especially looks disappointing. It's also a pity the superb intro pic of the castle is spoilt by a mediocre selection screen, featuring an effeminate prince and a muscular princess! However once you actually get into the game its charm soon becomes persuasive. Details such as the manacles in the dungeon, the spit in the kitchen fireplace, and the bell in the tower really help to create a good atmosphere. Then there's how once weakened you can only crawl, the bizarre clues, and the slick way the controls work. The moving ghosts, unique to the Amiga, are undetailed and move slowly – but they rival anything in *Infestation* and show off the host machine. C64 *CM* compensates for the lack of moving ghosts with puzzles and hidden stationary ghosts which have to be spotted and shot quickly. By comparison with *Infestation*, *Castle Master* has less rooms and realism, but it's more fun, packed with many more puzzles and is very tough.



▼ You get that spine-chilling feeling as you walk down an empty corridor – could a ghost be lurking round the corner? (C64)



▼ Well . . . what's the use of a well without a bucket? (Oh Mr Tarbuck, it cuts me up, it really does!) (Amiga)



64

PRESENTATION 86%
'Different' scene-setting verses by Mel Croucher, music/FX, save/load options, disappointing title page.

GRAPHICS 94%
Surprisingly quick considering their complexity with lots of detail and atmosphere; the latter is even better than the Amiga.

SOUND 80%
Quite good tune, if repetitive, and some good spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 85%
Not quite as easy to get into as the Amiga game, although the more convincing atmosphere (all muted colours) is entrancing.

LASTABILITY 94%
A sizeable Amiga game has been shrunk down to the C64, losing very little.

OVERALL 93%

The utterly unique 8-bit Freescape system provides a wonderful spooky world for you to explore.

amiga

PRESENTATION 86%
Good title page, but comical sex selection sequence (prince or princess being taken off by massive claws), save/load option, music/FX, Mel Croucher scenario.

GRAPHICS 86%
Initially unimpressive, but attention to detail with plenty of nice touches soon grows on you.

SOUND 80%
Spooky tune or atmospheric spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 88%
Surprisingly addictive, as soon as you walk through the drawbridge you start stumbling over little puzzles which get you into it.

LASTABILITY 92%
Lots of puzzles, two slightly different ways of completing it depending on sex.

OVERALL 90%

Spookily special.

ZZAP! TesT

64

FIENDISH FREDDY'S BIG TOP O' FUN

Mindscape, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk

If the Poll Tax wasn't bad enough, I.M. Tightwad's blasted bank is demanding instant repayment of its $10,000 loan otherwise it's going to seize the circus! There's only one way to raise the money – to put on the performance of a lifetime . . . but the traitorous clown Fiendish Freddy has been sent to sabotage the show!

After a hilarious scene-setting intro, prospective circus savers are asked to step forward by a carnival hawker. Up to five people can participate, either putting on a whole show or choosing to practise one of the six events. Each event is a separate load, divided by an appearance by the five judges who award each player cash for his performance.

The first act is Phenomenal Feats Of Diving Daring, where Horace climbs an immensely high platform to dive into a barrel first, then as the height increases, a teacup! You must ensure he lands on target, despite Fiendish Freddy trying to blow him off course with a fan, and also perform various manoeuvres. Waggling the joystick builds up momentum until you can assume such positions as Ballet and Dive Bomb!

Genuine Juggling Genius is required by Jeffy-Joe the unicycling clown, with a seal tossing him skittles and flaming torches. Left/right moves the clown or, if fire is held down, causes the appropriate hand to throw up. Jeffy–Joe must also watch out for bombs and even a baby which has to be returned to its cot!

In Breathtaking Bravado from Hazardous Heights the scantily clad Finola must leap from swinging trapeze to swinging trapeze.

The Deadly and Dangerous Daggers of Death has Knancy tied onto a spinning wheel with several balloons. You must hurl a limited number of knives, bursting the balloons without hitting the girl.

Tony Tiptoe is the star of Tense Travel Techniques on Tightrope. A screen-long stretch of rope has to be traversed using forward to move across, with left/right controlling the vital balancing pole. Relatively easy – until Freddy starts throwing razor-edged Frisbees!

The final event is the explosive Combustible Cannons of Colossal Courage. Fernando climbs into a cannon filled with TNT. You must then quickly place a trampoline where you think he'll land. Then the cannon begins to fall down; press fire when you've got the right angle and Fernando goes flying!

However badly you mess up an event, you carry on through all six to be rewarded by an amusing end-game sequence.

▼ The judges calmly discuss your performance.



▼ The hilarious juggling scene; watch out for Fiendish Freddy and his bombs!





When Amiga *Freddy* Sizzled last year, we regarded C64 conversion with scepticism. But a sensible C64 multiload means almost nothing has been lost – there's even the hilarious intro. Considering the manic cartoon-style humour of the original, including a scene where the fallen tightrope walker clings to the rope before Freddy smashes his hand, this is an incredible achievement. But behind the graphics there's lots of playability – the juggling is particularly fun. In effect *Freddy* offers six hilarious, above-average mini-games which can be combined into a single big game, all at a bargain price. Great fun!



The Amiga game was hilarious fun, and *Fiendish Freddy* has lost none of its humorous appeal in the conversion to the 64. The events are pretty much the same as they were; all very playable in their own right and brilliantly presented with gorgeous cartoon graphics. Of course there's most fun is with more than one player – even if you don't save the circus, you can have brilliant multi-player competitions. The game's strongest point is undoubtedly its wicked sense of humour, which makes even losing very amusing. If *Fiendish Freddy* doesn't raise a smile you must have a worse sense of humour than the Scorelord!

PRESENTATION 93%
Attractive box, amusing and informative instructions, five player option, brilliant intro/interlevel sequences, plus a very well thought out multiload.

GRAPHICS 91%
The fantastic, cartoon-style original has been brilliantly converted. Tons of humour, imagination and great animation will amaze you!

SOUND 82%
Appropriately circus-like tunes for each event, plus effective spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 90%
Great intro, friendly multiload and easily accessible gameplay make it very easy to get hooked . . .

LASTABILITY 86%
. . . saving the Big Top is a substantial challenge, while multi-player option makes for fun competition.

OVERALL 89%

The funniest, whackiest game yet seen on the C64.

Rorschach
Scientific Stationary

RESEARCH PROJECT: Binary code addiction as a means of controlling the world.
HEAD SCIENTIST: Prof NORMAN NUTZ Phd, Bsc, KP.
RESEARCH EQUIPMENT: C64, Amiga A500, Çray-2.

LAB ASSISTANT: The Geek

Several readers have asked why the Lab Report is always in mono. I'm reliably informed (no names, no pig swill) that it's due to ZZAP!'s arcadey reviewers (those guys with blisters on their thumbs — they assure me they get that from waggling joysticks all day) reckoning this section only deserves black and white pages and that colour should be reserved for their game reviews. Well, after several days of arm-twisting (not to mention joystick-busting) I've persuaded the Ed to give us adventurers a splash of colour. So a short intro to squeeze in more colour shots of the excellent Dragon's Breath.

LAB Report

DRAGON'S BREATH

Palace, Amiga £29.99

Dwarf Mountain (a contradiction in terms if you ask me . . . oh, you didn't) has stood in the land of Anrea since the beginning of time and is the source of evil forces that plague the surrounding countryside with war and famine. The mountain's pinnacle holds the secret of immortality, a secret craved by three Anrean dragonmasters. For a spot of amusement (and 'cause there's only snooker on the telly) the Great Lords of Anrea permit these three to fight for entry to Dwarf Mountain.

Scattered across the land are three sections of a talisman which, when joined, form a key to the mountain. The first dragonmaster to successfully manipulate his dragons to find and keep all the sections will gain immortality.

Before play commences choose which dragonmaster you want to be; the remaining two are controlled by other humans (if you know any) or computer.

Each dragonmaster begins with a single dragon, hence the basis of *Dragon's Breath* is to breed sufficient dragons to search, fight for, and guard the talisman pieces.

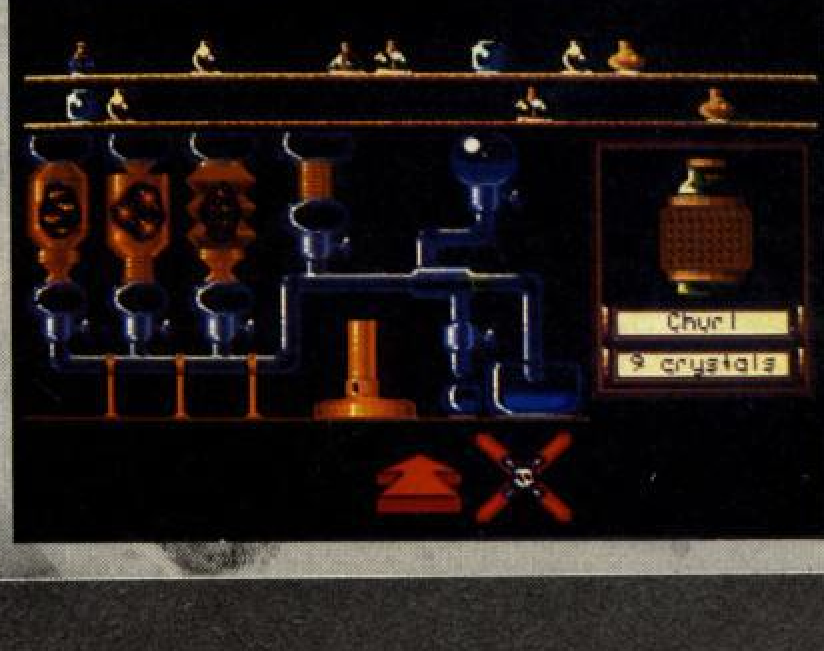
However, things aren't that easy: not only are you harassed by the other dragonmasters but also by monetary problems. You need dosh to finance the building of your dragon forces and to maintain a good supply of spell ingredients (more about spells in a mo'). You can carry out tasks for needy villages to gain financial rewards but most of your money comes from taxes on villages you own.

Once you've chosen a dragonmaster the Castle Screen is displayed, through which are accessed a detailed and very informative map of the countryside, your library, your dragons' lair, spell laboratory, egg incubator, and back door.

The map permits a detailed study of areas and villages across Anrea and is the means by which you select targets for your dragons to attack, destroy, overthrow, or search.

The library provides info on your financial situation (overdrafts are not allowed), news of happenings in Anrea (even dragonmasters like a bit of gossip), and your current stock of spell ingredients.

Your incubator allows development of up to four dragon eggs at a time. Temperatures – set at your discretion – at which they incubate influence the strength of new-born dragons: the longer its incubation period the stronger the beast will be . . . and the more expensive to hatch.



Your back door is where tradesmen appear from time to time to sell spell ingredients. The door flashes when someone's knocking.

Your dragons' lair has cells for up to eight dragons although you may have more spread throughout Anrea, guarding villages or pieces of the talisman. Selecting a dragon's cell allows close study of the creature, informing you of its health, strength, wisdom, eyesight, and whether it's diseased or not.

As you sit in the relative safety of your castle you dispatch dragons to perform your dirty work. Dragon missions are either undertaken by computer or, if you're feeling particularly dexterous, grab the joystick and control the fire-breathing ferocity yourself as he tackles tasks given. However, until you become proficient with control methods, personally directing dragons greatly improves their chances of dying.

Your spell laboratory is the nub of the game. The manual states that you can play *Dragon's Breath* without ever having to use a spell, but as your opponents (especially those of the computer kind) will definitely use them against you it's best to at least dabble in the mystic arts. Spells are used to improve your dragons' powers, to affect villages (increase population of those in your control and decrease the population of those not), to enhance egg incubation, to increase your supply of eggs, and aid your financial position. They are prepared for casting by mixing ingredients from stock in your spell room. Each ingredient affects the spell in a positive or negative way, as does the method of adding it to a spell mixture (a fairly complex template helps you to sort out which does what).

Each player takes a turn doing whatever deeds he sees fit for success: raiding villages, buying spell ingredients, incubating, and so on. And when all three are satisfied you're returned to the start screen where time is moved forward one month. Now you sit and watch the outcome of players' deeds, unless you decided to control your dragon's exploits yourself – then it's waggle-that-joystick time.

Throughout the game highly detailed graphics and an extraordinary sound track accompany



your efforts to gain entry to Dwarf Mountain. And although spells are quite complex and take some time to master they add excitement and adventure to what is otherwise a basic, if very pretty, strategy game. So ignore the idea that you can play *Dragon's Breath* without using magic and get casting; you'll get the hang of it . . . after a spell.

ATMOSPHERE	**89%**
PUZZLE FACTOR	**N/A**
INTERACTION	**90%**
LASTABILITY	**87%**
OVERALL	**91%**

XENOMORPH

Pandora, Amiga £24.99

Supplies, supplies! That's where your vocation lies. Unfortunately, while you're carrying out a routine delivery to a mining installation on Sirius B disastrous events occur to make you wish you hadn't taken this particular job.

The main part of your ship judders out of Hyperspace on the approach to Sirius B but its detachable cargo pod decides not to follow. Luckily, your on-board CNS (Central Nervous System) remains calm and manages to thaw you out – cryogenics are used extensively in the year 2134 – and informs you of the situation before shutting itself down. After a couple of choruses of 'Freeze a jolly good fellow' you get down to flying half a ship to your destination. Three arduous days later you arrive at the Essen mining station on Sirius B. You should be relieved at having made it but the distinct lack of life in the complex causes concern; you wonder what on Sirius B could have happened to the 200 workers stationed here.

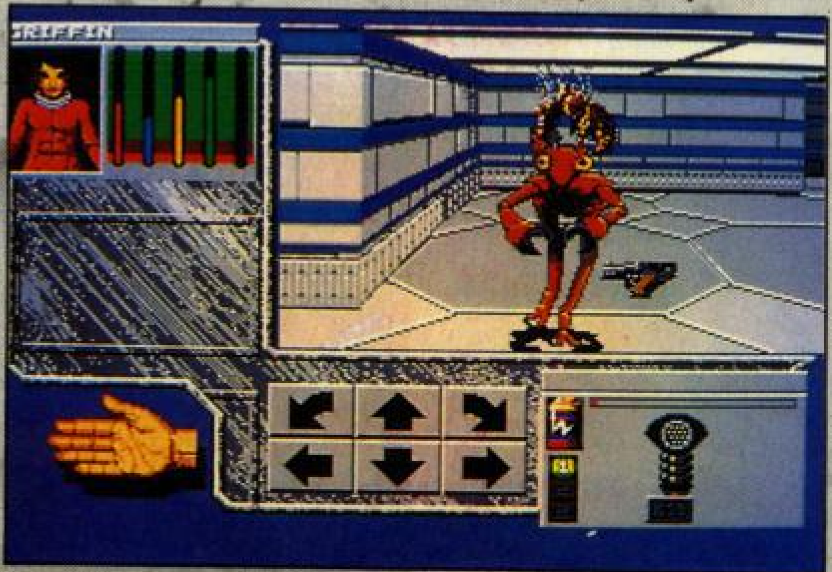
However, [illegible] as your main objec[illegible]d your ship and get b[illegible]u swallow your fea[illegible]to explore the complex in the hope of finding the necessary resources (and preferably nothing else). You need fuel for your ship, electrical components for your knackered CNS, and sustenance for yourself . . . but will you survive long enough to find them?

A t'riffic title track full of sampled shouts an' shots over an oriental(ish) tune is guaranteed to make you stop and listen before inserting disk B to start play. When eventually you do, the screen changes from a very nice graphic of the mining complex to six (equally nice) display windows. These show your view of surroundings (the packaging states it's 'Full first person perspective' . . . I wonder what 'Half first person' would look like), inventory, status, direction options, special equipment, and items currently carried in each hand.

Locations update jerkily, but effectively, as you move around with distant areas shown in varying depths of shadow which lighten as you approach – a very nice touch.

FX are good, especially the noise made by your magnum (when you find it), but doors, machinery, and so on are equally enhanced by suitable sounds.

As you explore deeper into the complex you come across panels containing clothing, weapons, food, drugs – to combat radiation, hunger, and headaches – or computer terminals. Other objects, such as data disks, are to be found in hard-to-reach nooks and crannies within the complex. Some of the items available to you are explained in the booklet accompanying the game while many others are left for you to discover their use.



As you search and destroy (yes, you do come across the odd alien who needs a good thrashing) keep an eye on your status window: lack of food and drink logically affects your health and too large a dose of radiation has a negative effect on your chances of returning home. Drugs can help with health problems but you need to know codes to access suitable medication – administering any old narcotic into your blood stream could be fatal.

The essence of *Xenomorph* is mapping: if you don't like having to chart your surroundings you may not appreciate this game. But if you get a kick out of plotting, pop out and purchase *Xenomorph* and get down to some Sirius game playing!

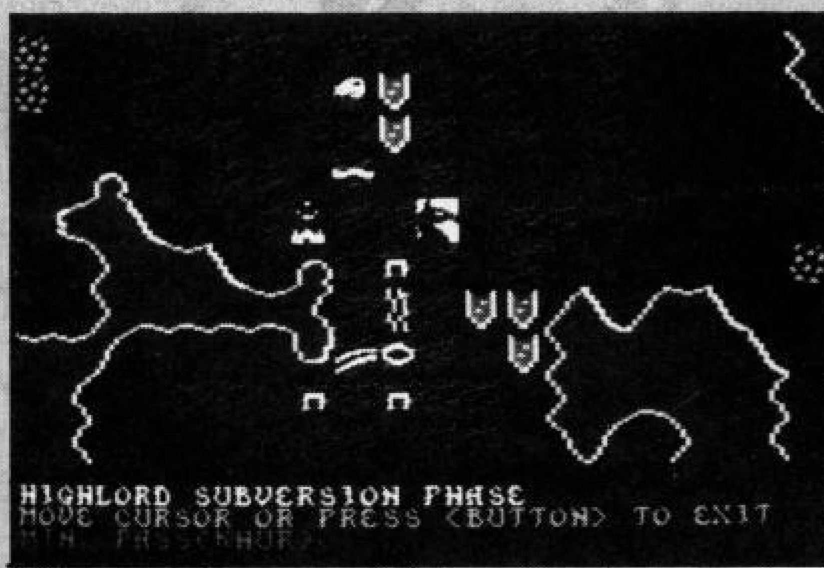
ATMOSPHERE	**83%**
PUZZLE FACTOR	**87%**
INTERACTION	**88%**
LASTABILITY	**84%**
OVERALL	**88%**

WAR OF THE LANCE

US Gold/SSI, C64 £24.99 (disk only)

Following the Great Cataclysm, dragons have been banished from Ansalon, in the kingdom of Krynn, for more than a millennium; people are beginning to take their now-peaceful existence for granted and security has become lax. And so it is with little effort that Takhisis, Queen Of Darkness (and villain of almost every Advanced Dungeons And Dragons scenario) and her new ally, Highlord of Neraka, muster draconian forces and taste victory in their first battle with the armies of Whitestone (he's the good guy). Krynn's in the poo once again! Are you person enough to face the challenge of battle and drive Highlord back to the Khalkist Mountains from whence he crawled?

War Of The Lance (*WOTL*) is a one or two-player game with either a friend or your computer commanding Highlord while you look after Whitestone. Each campaign lasts six years (thankfully not in real time, but actually thirty game turns) during which time both players engage their armies in battle to conquer enemy territory. While bloody battles are being fought, champions quest for magic items to help



your cause. Alternatively, you may dispatch diplomats rather than soldiers in an effort to gain alliance with other countries.

WOTL can be won in two ways: by having more points than your enemy at the end of play or by destroying his central nations.

Once you've selected who's playing whom you choose either Campaign – the start of the war when Whitestone has no allies; or Scenario – further into the war when both sides have allies and Highlord has several conquered nations to brag about. There then follows a number of options allowing you to alter strength of units, lost-unit replacements, alliance percentages (how willing a country might be to join you), and combat effectiveness.

Play consists of several phases which include Message, Quest, Diplomatic, Movement, Recovery, and Combat (possible on land, sea, or in the air) – and players take turns at each. All phases are complex, highly detailed, and require much thought if a winning move is to be made, but then isn't that the basis of all good wargames?

WOTL was designed by David Landrey (also responsible for the award-winning *Gettysburg* and *Battles Of Napoleon*) which explains its depth, professionalism, attention to detail, and intricate strategies.

A particularly refreshing feature is that the whole game comes on one, double side disk – there's none of this 'Insert disk 12, side C' confusion which has been far too prevalent of late.

I should stress that even though you may have enjoyed other SSI/AD&D products, don't go rushing out blindly to buy this one. You might be disappointed: it's their first 'Wargame' and as such lacks the graphics (limited to icons flashing around on a basic, but scrolling, map), sound, and visual effects featured in *Pools Of Radiance* or *Champions Of Krynn*. Having said that, *WOTL* might be a good introduction to wargaming. If you like the Dragonlance scenarios, and pretty pictures don't make or break a game for you then you're half way there!

ATMOSPHERE	79%
PUZZLE FACTOR	N/A
INTERACTION	78%
LASTABILITY	81%
OVERALL	80%

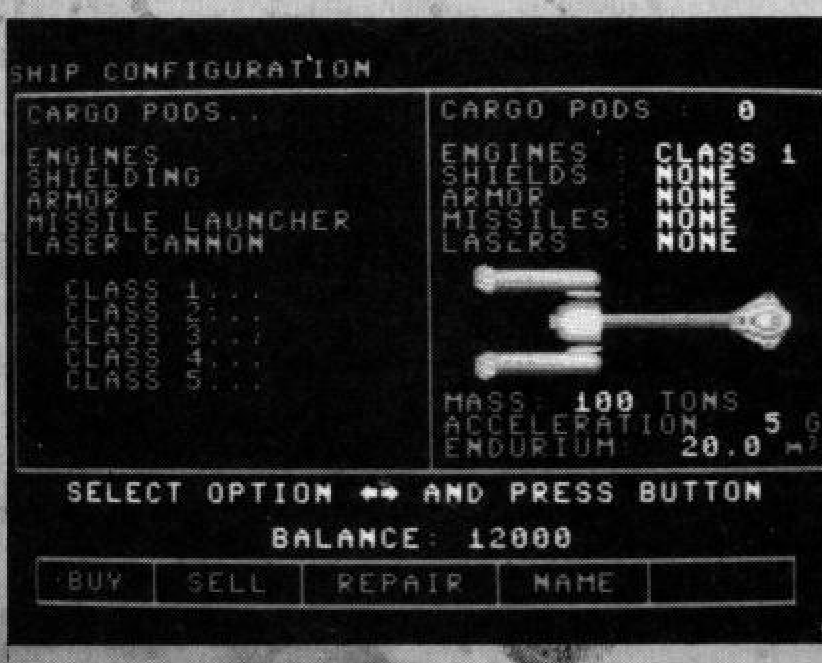
STARFLIGHT

Electronic Arts, C64 £14.99

update

If you want *Starflight*'s full scenario take a butcher's at ZZAP! 59 (page 22). However, for those too lazy to do even that, the basic plot involves you and your selected crew planet hopping and mining for minerals and artifacts to sell for profit to enable you to improve your ship (and to better train your crew) so you can travel farther afield to make even bigger profits. You also need to find out what's wrong with earth's sun before it goes nova . . . it's what any descent space hero would do!

The Starport section – where crew recruitment, commodity trading, and ship upgrading take place – is visually very different (but much funnier) than the Amiga version. You're depicted as a [illegible]man in a gleaming white space suit who struts horizontally along a corridor of [illegible] looking very smartly



before entering modules. He also taps his feet impatiently if you don't interact with him for a while.

Most other sections, such as decking out your ship, space flight, searching planets and so on, are similar to the Amiga game although minor (pun intended) differences such as having no SCAN or LOOK option to examine planetside objects and the use of coloured blocks instead of icons for object identification exist.

Starflight's depth and massive play area is maintained on the C64 (270 star systems and 800 planets) and music and FX are at least as good (bad?) as on the Amiga. It's only graphics (and their animation) that are actually worse (hard to believe) on the 8-bit machine. However, as *Starflight* involves trading, communication, and strategy, graphics take a back seat (more like locked in the boot actually) to game play.

The C64 version gets a better mark than its Amiga counterpart 'cause, for it to be such a close downgrade, the creators (Binary Systems) couldn't have been trying very hard on the 16-bit game.

ATMOSPHERE	82%
PUZZLE FACTOR	N/A
INTERACTION	77%
LASTABILITY	86%
OVERALL	83%

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RINGS OF MEDUSA

Starbyte, Amiga £29.99

Snakes alive! If it isn't that old boa bonce, Medusa ravaging the kingdom of Morenor. She's must be hisssterical if she thinks Crown Prince Cirion is gonna stand for that load of adders: just 'cause her horde of demons and dragons have overthrown the land and left him a pauper doesn't mean he's finished. All he has to do is make enough money to build a massive army then find five magic rings so he can summon Medusa and challenge her to a final, bloody battle for the kingdom . . . it seems like a good day for Cirion to have stayed in bed.

Alone on the plains of Morenor, with only a thousand monetary units for company, the task ahead seems awesome. But a crown prince has gotta do what a crown prince has gotta do, and standing around sulking doe[illegible] win kingdoms. It's time t[illegible] into the nearest town an[illegible] righting wrongs.

Towns are scattered throughout Morenor (some more friendly than others) and it is in them that most money-making tasks are performed in an effort to win back your kingdom. A visit to the bank should get you started, as arranging a loan is a doddle – although you do have to pay it back within three months or people in the area will cease trading with you.

Also in towns are temples, stables, parks, pubs, jewellers, castles, and so on. And once you've secured a loan you could do worse than visit the local stable and buy a couple of wagons (complete with horses) to improve your commodity-carrying capabilities for trading between towns (*Elite* style). Popping into the pub is a good pastime if you feel lucky (well do ya punk?) 'cause there's always a game similar to Blackjack available and you may just come out with a profit (but I wouldn't bet on it).

If you've any money left from your town wanderings you might take a walk to the park to hire a soldier or two (try doing that in this country) to help protect you from attack by villains and thieves outside the town gates.

Travelling from town to town gives you an idea of market prices in each (the greater the distance between towns the greater the price difference of certain commodities). Also, some towns specialise in particular products, making them a snip for the travelling trader to buy and creating bigger profits when he sells them elsewhere.

Trading isn't the only way to make money: should you find ore on your over-land travels you can set up a mine (if you can afford the necessary equipment) and sell the excavated minerals. You can also look for treasure (again requiring expensive equipment) or, should you have a strong enough army, attack other armies and nick their booty.

Wanderings aren't restricted to land however, and, when you're rich enough, you can buy ships to travel to the many islands surrounding Morenor, perhaps indulging in a little piracy along the way.

Among all this mining, fighting, and trading are the aforementioned five magic rings. Each one enhances your powers in a certain way, and when all five are in your possession you can summon Medusa and hopefully kick her out of Morenor.



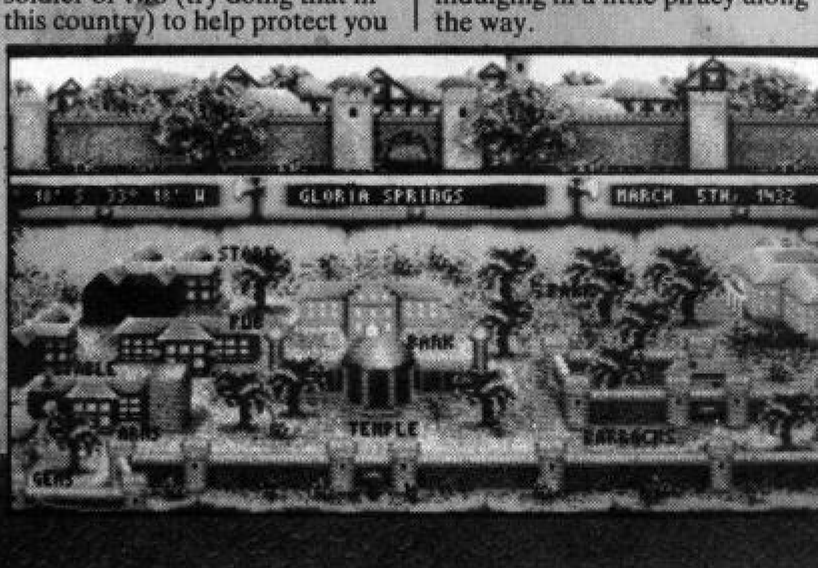
All functions in *Rings Of Medusa* (recruiting and arming soldiers and sailors, fighting, buying and selling, mining for ore, and protecting recaptured towns) are detailed and require some strategic thought. Visual displays are neat, using nicely-drawn graphics and smooth (if limited) animation.

Actions are controlled using icons at the base of the screen, some of which are only available during suitable situations – there would be no point in being able to open a mine when at sea, for example.

Music plays continuously . . . until you switch it off, of course; which may be sooner than the composer might like. Oddly, there are no sound effects featured.

Professionally produced, the only real negative aspect of *Rings Of Medusa* is lastability: it's not exactly exciting to play and isn't suitable for long sessions. But if you tackle it in short bursts – taking it off the shelf every now and then to give it another go (it features a save game option) – your pointer shouldn't click on the Quit icon through boredom and you'll get more pleasure out of your battle with Medusa.

ATMOSPHERE	70%
PUZZLE FACTOR	61%
INTERACTION	75%
LASTABILITY	55%
OVERALL	71%





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ZZAP! MEGATAPE INSTRUCTIONS 6

Detente has broken down, Diplomatic relations have been severed. A new cold war had started.

The Soviet Union and the United States of America are at each other's throats again, for what may be the very last time. America's satellite defence network has been tampered with and the White House has accused the USSR of space sabotage. The Kremlin is wildly indignant, their official statement being that 'America is trying to shift the blame for their own technical ineptitude onto the Rodina'. Everybody is more than a little edgy as the world teeters on the brink of nuclear oblivion with figureheads on both sides of the iron curtain just about ready to push The Button. Things are looking bad until . . .

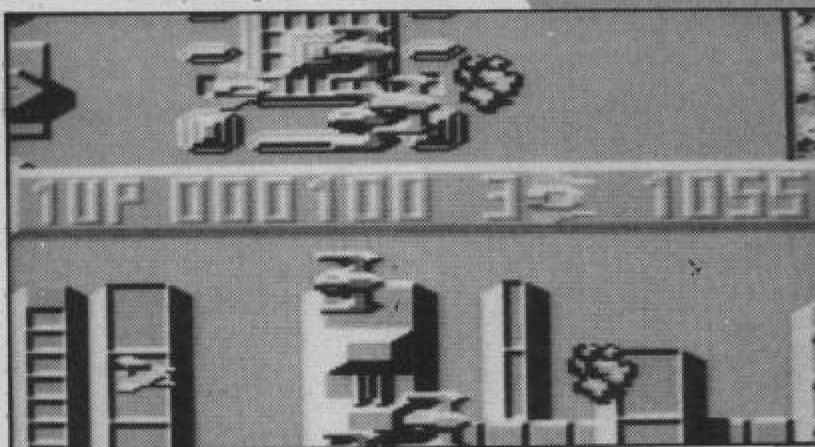
Somewhere in the Artic Circle, January 16th.

The Global Village suddenly becomes deaf, dumb and blind when, for thirty seconds, the most awesomely powerful radio transmission is sent from the top of the world – the last message from a dying Alien whose only mistake was to misjudge the strength of the planet's magnetic field. Through simple triangulation the source of the radio emission is soon determined and it's the Americans who arrive at the space ship wreck first. Since the UFO came down in an American sector it is quite easy to shut the Russians out of the picture. The boffins are set to work and from the debris they learn a frightening secret . . .

The ship was piloted by a member of a galaxy-wide Empire that has dominated the immediate cosmos for millenia, and the Aliens who run this Empire are very interested in mankind. The Empire's fascination stemmed from the humans' almost amazing technological progression during the last couple of centuries, coming from unpowered wooden chariots to space exploration within an incredibly small time span, largely through a barbaric indulgence in genocidal war. After a while the fascination turned to fear, as many leading social theoreticians pointed out that this species would soon be swarming through the galaxy, bringing with them aggression, barbarism and probably the eradication of the Empire.

To stunt this malignant species' frightening evolution, a Culture

SANXION
(Thalamus)



Technician had been sent to manipulate mankind towards a nuclear death, intended to neatly nip the problem in the bud. It had been quite easy, the odd touch here, the slightest altering there and Mankind was all set to destroy itself. The final touch was just being administered with the gradual destruction of America's 'Star Wars' project when the Technician crashed and the Empire's cover was blown.

Not a particularly pleasant secret to uncover and definitely one too large to keep under wraps, since the massive display of radio power had done more than temporarily blind the world, it had also informed the Empire that they were out in the open. Earth's leaders realised that soon the Aliens would be on the spot in force.

Immediate amnesty was the only solution. America and Russia jointly set up **Project Damocles**, a joint 'think tank' to discuss the now obvious necessity of global defence for the inevitable conflict between Man and Alien.

And from 'Damocles' came **Operation Sanxion**, a proposal for a defence corps piloting a breed of ship based around existing weaponry, and technology gleaned from the visitor's spacecraft. The ships would constantly patrol the planet warding off and destroying any Alien presence, stopping only at the **ReGen** (fuel and rest) stations that were to be hastily constructed across the world. With only days to spare **Operation Sanxion** became operative.

In *Sanxion*, the simulation, you will encounter a variety of Aliens using different tactics to dominate various parts of the planet. As a member of the Sanxion Corps it's up to you to destroy any Alien infiltration.

After each section is successfully defended the pilot must go through a short training session to prepare him for the horrors to come. These sessions take place against a rainbow background, the task on each section being indicated by letters on the droid targets.

S= shoot
C= collide
P½= Pick up

Should you prove a competent trainee (for example: colliding with or shooting a predetermined quota of targets) you are awarded an extra bonus of 1000 points. Collision with barriers, although not fatal on this section, should be avoided as they drastically reduce any time left . . .

. . . and time is precious, both in combat and in training, as reaching a ReGen station before the timer hits zero earns valuable extra points. An extra ship is awarded every 10,000 points.

As well as attacking Aliens there are a number of other hazards which need to be negotiated. Some of the ReGen stations are protected by security barriers to prevent Alien infiltration (indicated by a sonic alarm) and to the less skilful pilot they can prove deadly. **The first defence wall appears at ReGen station 2** – you will have to discover the whereabouts of the others for yourself. Of course, the astute pilot will commit to memory the layout of all the security barriers. Once all ten world sectors have been patrolled you are promoted to **Sanxion Class 1** and go on to patrol the Darkside and do battle against the Empire's secondary attack system.

LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

Insert tape in the player, making sure that it is rewound. While holding down the **shift** key. press the **run/stop** key.
When the screen prompts you, press Play on the player.
Sanxion will now load automatically.

NOTE: If you are having problems loading, please remove any peripherals, such as disk drive, printer, cartridges etc. you may have attached, and repeat the above procedure.

Once *Sanxion* has loaded press **space bar** for options

F1 Toggles between one player and two player.
F3 Toggles between Joystick and Keyboard.
F5 Turns title screen music off/on.

Joystick in either port (although this allows you to hinder your opponent in two player games!).

To pause, press the **Run/Stop** key.

To exit to the title screen, press **Run/Stop** followed by **t**.

KEYBOARD CONTROLS

Up .... =
Down .... Shift
Left .... z
Right x
Fire .... Return

CREDITS

Stavros Fasoulas – Programming, graphics, games design, a full memory and, erm, being Finnish . . .
David Whittaker – For all them strange noises that go bump, boom (etc) in the game.
Rob Hubbard –For the Binary Symphonies: 'Thalamusik' and 'Romeo and Juliet'.
Serge Prokofiev – For Romeo and Juliet, a classic. Buy it, but buy this first.
John Twiddy – For Twid-e-lode
© 1986.

MUTANTS
(Ocean)

The game is set in a distant future, when man has colonised the remote star systems and matter can be manipulated with ease. Unfortunately man's political and moral development has remained stagnant since the second millenium and interstellar war has raged for the last 600 years.

You are a member of a thinly spread group of dissenters who are opposed to the weapons research carried out by the Survivor Zero Corporation. You have discovered that the weapons used by all sides in the war are supplied by the corporation and that they are currently experimenting with a new generation of weapons called Macro-Genetic-Mutoids. MGMs are the first large scale biological weapons capable of mutating into ever more virulent and robust species, hence the name 'Mutants' – your task is to eliminate this deadly system. . . . . it will not be easy.

LOADING

Make sure that tape is rewound to the beginning of the relevant side. Ensure all the leads are connected. Press the SHIFT key and the RUN/STOP key simultaneously. Follow the screen intructions (press play on tape). The program will then load automatically. For C128 loading type GO 64 (RETURN), then follow C64 instruction. When loading is complete press FIRE BUTTON to start.

CONTROLS

The game can be controlled by the keyboard or joystick in port 2. No action is required to select which mode to use.
JOYSTICK moves the ship (or cursor)
FIRE – emits the selected weapon from the ship OR selects the icon under the cursor.

KEYBOARD

FIRE – Top row keys
UP – Second row keys
DOWN – Third row keys
LEFT – **< and alternate keys on fourth row**
RIGHT – > and alternate keys on fourth row
PAUSE – Space (any other key to restart)

To select an icon move the cursor over the top of it and press FIRE.
To leave a zone place the ship on the pad in the middle and press FIRE.

THE GAME

You control the 'Rainbow Warrior', a single man patrol ship. Your task is to enter the 15 deep space test zones of the Survivor Zero Corporation and find the components of a self-destruct mechanism.

All 15 of these components must be collected and assembled in a 16th zone called the control zone to destroy the system and gain access to level 2 of the game.

Each test zone contains a different strain of mutants.

You have four lives and no time limits to complete your task.

The game begins with your ship coupled to the mothership, waiting to be telebeamed into a zone of your choice.

MOTHERSHIP MENU

The menu on the left of the screen contains six icons. To select an icon move the cursor over the top of it and press FIRE.

The top two icons select music or sound effects.

The top arrow points to which mode is currently selected.

The next three icons are the weapons available.

The bottom white arrow points to the weapon currently selected.

MISSILES

These are high-yield explosive devices that have an effect over a large area, but can only be fired one at a time.

BARRIERS

These are degradable defensive weapons that can be used to effect a temporary shield against the mutants. They have no effect on the ship.

The supply of these devices is limited, so after ejecting the full load the ship's weapon system automatically switches to photon torpedoes.

PHOTON TORPEDOES

These are rapid fire, low yield optical weapons. (The weapon system classifies these as a default selection.)

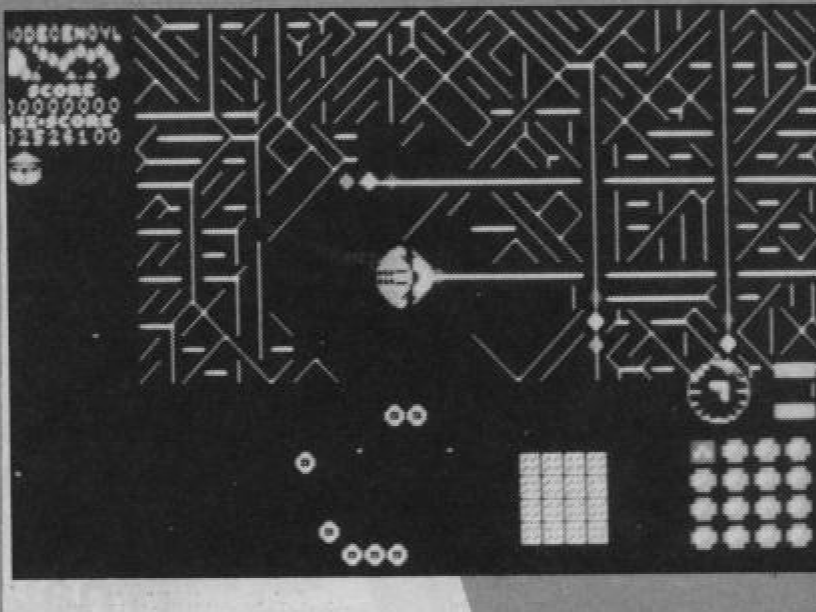
The last icon is a picture of the ship and selecting this icon switches to the Zone Map.

Holding down fire instead of releasing it will bypass the Zone Map and switch directly to the zone last visited.

ZONE MAP

The Zone Map is a 4x4 grid representing the 16 zones of the research establishment. The top left zone is the Control Zone, the others are test zones.

Pressing fire with the cursor in one of the zones telebeams the ship into that zone.



TEST ZONES

The ship materialises on a telepad in the centre of the zone. The zone is bounded by a high-energy barrier, collison with the barrier will destroy the ship.

You must battle your way through the mutant colony to collect the self-destruct component.

Any number of components may be carried at once, but will of course be lost at the end of the game.

Landing on the telepad in the centre of the zone and pressing FIRE telebeams the ship back to the mothership.

CONTROL ZONE

The ship materialises in a telepad in a maze of corridors. The assembly point for the self-destruct mechanism is visible and you must find your way to the assembly point without coming into contact with any of the walls.

Flying over the assembly point will automatically deposit any components you are carrying. A successful delivery of any number of components will give you BONUS LIVES up to a full complement of 3 lives.

ZONE STATUS DISPLAYS

While in the test or control zones the screen displays the following information:
Chemical analysis of mutant components
Score this game
Highest score since loading
Number of lives left
Direction to centre of mutant colony
Shield energy level
Size and energy level of mutant colony
Status and self-destruct components
Circle – still in test zone
Triangle – being carried
Square – assembled in control zone
NOW ON WITH THE MISSION!

HINTS AND TIPS

* Certain screens can only be completed by using one specific weapon – determine which is the best to use.
* Collect as many token as you can until you have only one life – these can then be deposited in the maze and your lives replenished.

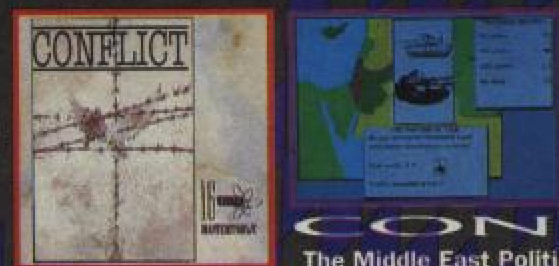
CREDITS

Game concept and programming Denton Design.
Produced by Ocean by D.C. Ward.

CEREBRAL SOFTWARE



"As the disk loaded, I felt drawn into different reality, an alternative world where I assumed the identity of another"

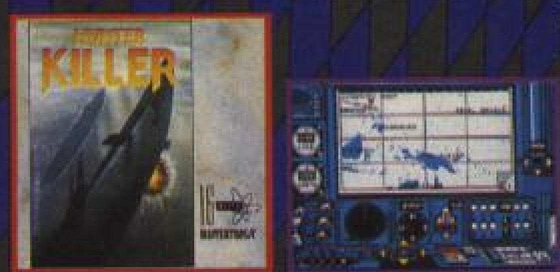


CONFLICT

The Middle East Political Simulation

IBM PC • COMING SOON - Amiga • Atari ST

The Middle East Today is as unstable and dangerous as at any time since the Crusades. The superpowers encourage their 'fighting cocks' and try out military gadgets in the best of conditions. It is the potential cradle of World War III. CONFLICT puts you in a world where military and economic forces combine to simulate the multiple pressures that a national leader is under in a modern nation state. Your aim: to force the collapse of all four neighbouring governments. A frightening and highly realistic wargame.



HUNTER KILLER

Amiga • Atari ST

Experience the reality of commanding an American WWII combat submarine in the South Pacific. Master the controls of your vessel, then embark on a series of missions - from 'search and destroy' sorties to detailed escort duties modelled on real WWII campaigns. With eleven different submarines, fourteen separate missions to attempt, at a range of difficulty levels as well as practise patrols that take place during the day or at night, HUNTER KILLER has a host of features that outclass any other submarine simulation.



GRIMBLOOD

Amiga • Atari ST

Place yourself deep within the walls of Castle Grimblood, here lurks a murderer, who is preying on those who live by and keep the rituals. You as the young Earl, Maximus, must uncover the terrible secret in order that he can unlock the chains of timeless obedience to the rituals of the castle and gain his freedom. If you fail you are certain to fall victim yourself to the stalking assassins knife...
A gothic whodunnit, written by Mike Singleton, featuring digitised sound and graphics and promising a different game every load!

16 BLITZ
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Screenshots may be taken from a different version.

WIN WITH CASTLE M

..A GREAT SONY GHETTO

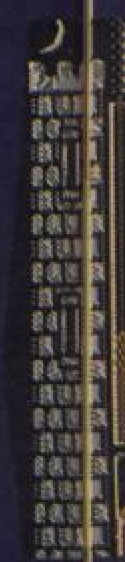
There was an evil Magister
Who kidnapped your brother (or sister),
He hid them away in his castle,
He's such a terrible rascal.
Your sibling can't make an escape
From the confines of solid Freescape,
So now it's all up to you
You know what you've got to do:
Buy Castle Master to play
For hours and hours every day,
Get past all the ghouls and the ghosts,
And 'solved it!' you may proudly boast.
But being a hero is rough,
You may find the going quite tough.
Though if you get stuck in your quest,
You know the Incentive's the best
So carry on looking for clues,
Written on walls to peruse:
They'll help you the puzzles to beat
And the Magister to defeat.



How's about that then: reckon I'll make poet laureate? What do you mean, 'No'?! Perhaps *you* could do better. Well there's a great Incentive (groan) for you to try in this arty farty comp. The top-master of rhyme (first prize winner) will win an incredible top-of-the-range Sony CD radio cassette recorder with twin cassette decks, CD synchronised dubbing, megabass (an essential for the serious ghetto blaster), an in-built digital clock, and much more! There are also thirty impressive *Castle Master* mobiles for the runners-up to hang up in their bedrooms.

All you have to do is answer the questions and complete the limerick (ie do four more lines) in the most amusing way possible:

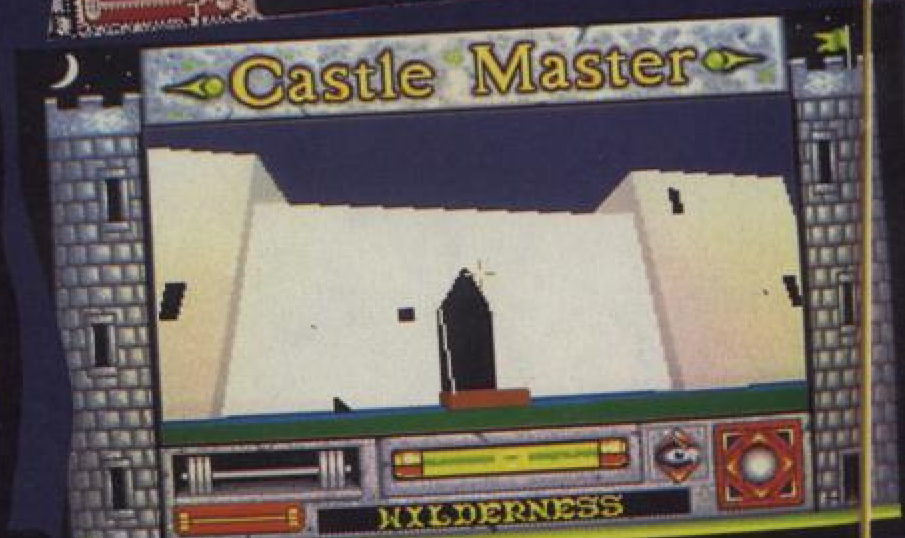




1. Incentive's first ever game: perhaps you could tell us its name (it rhymes with that).

2. The first Freescape game was a thriller, now what was it called? It was . . .

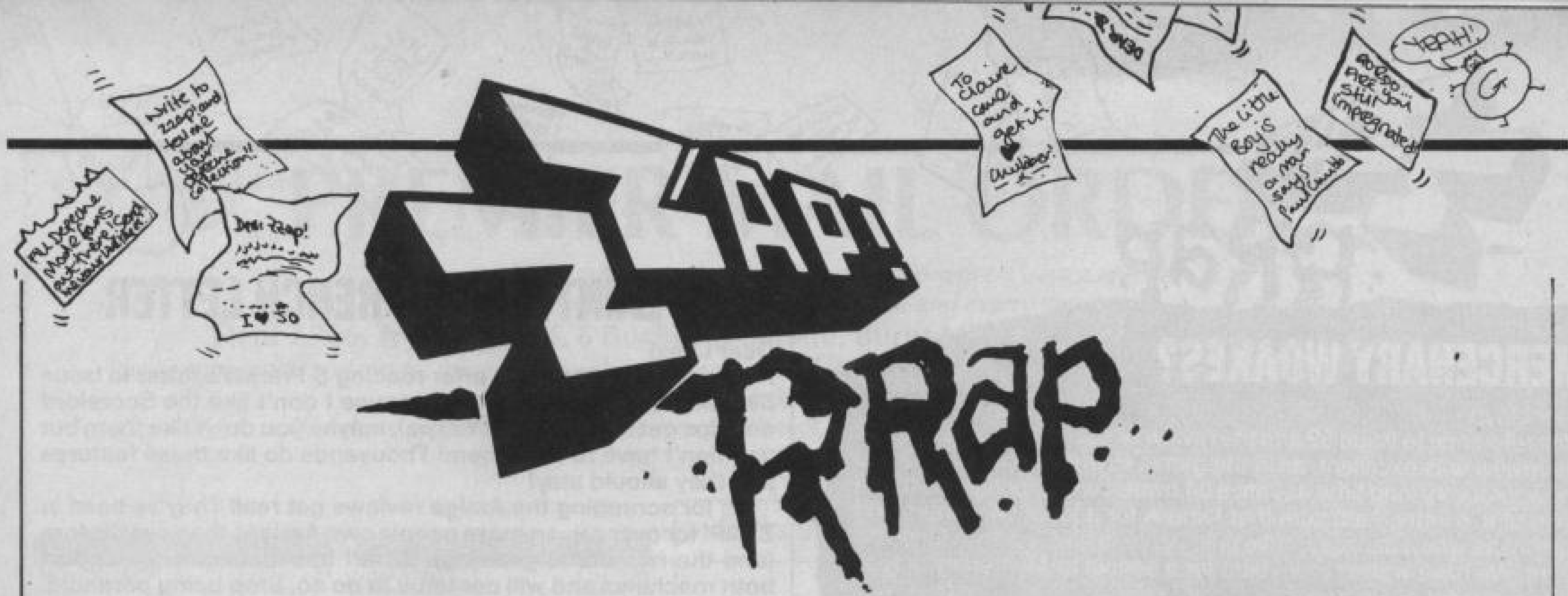
There was a great mag called ZZAP!,
....
....
....
....



Write everything down on the back of a postcard (or sealed envelope) and send it to *I'M A POET AND I KNOW IT COMP, Stalag ZZAP!, Newsfield Ltd, The Case Mills, Temeside, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.*
(The usual comp rules apply, so try to cheat and you'll fry!)


MASTER!
BLASTER!!
Castle Master
GREAT HALL
SONY
MEGA BASS
SONY


KICK
OFF
2
AVR



As I sit here in my dingy prison cell in Stalag Newsfield, I reminisce about the good times before the Scorelord took over. In those days I could have a proper drink (not just bleach from his confounded vending machine), have my dear old Grandma visit me (without her being supervised, even in the lavvy), and listen to The Archers on my 1930s wireless (before it was confiscated by the evil alien).

Still, at least I have your letters to cheer me up. I know they've been steamed open and censored, but they're still a great comfort to me. And if anyone can slip me a file or a saw (preferably hidden inside a very tasty fruit cake), I'd be eternally grateful.

DISK-USTED

Dear Lloyd
I am disgusted with the 'Powers that be' with their attitude concerning the Software Industry, especially these 'Copier' programs to which they make us believe that they encourage software piracy on an industrial scale. First off I'm not going to talk about piracy because it's been covered in previous issues.

What I'm complaining about is the way us 'disk users' have to put our software 'on the line' every time we use them because we can't gain access (for some reason or other) to a Copier to make back-up copies of the originals.

Here's two examples:- I recently bought *Ultima V* from a software shop in Cardiff and after a fortnight's use the drive goes and wipes everything off one of the disks. So I get a replacement and after two hours play the same thing happens. This results in a third train journey to Cardiff to get a replacement. Ok, you might think 'a faulty batch', but consider how much time and money would have been saved it if had happened on my back-up copy.

With my copy of SSI's game *Demon's Winter* you actually need a copier to start the game as the disk is protected and thus unable to save characters onto. I overcame this problem when the shop where I had it actually suggested that I cut a slot into the disk so that I could save onto it.

What I'm getting at is that it's alright for Origin and SSI to say that it would be in your benefit to make copies of our disks when the damn things have been outlawed in this country. I'll finish with some praise firstly for ZZAP! (reader since Issue 1) on a professional and well laid out magazine, secondly for Microprose for their excellent Service when they first dealt with my faulty disk, and lastly for Electronic Arts for having the intelligence to include a Copier in their game *Wasteland* and so keeping the original safe.
Angry
Mike Woodman, Swansea SA7 9UH

I sympathise, Mike, I truly do. But unfortunately there are some people less scrupulous than yourself who use copiers to pirate disks, causing great damage to the software industry. However, despite the recent ban some hardware copying devices are still available, including Datel's Action Replay cartridge. But, under the 1988 Copyright Act, you must get permission from the relevant software house before making a back-up, even when it is solely for your own use.
LM

WELSH WIT

Dear Lloyd
Yahoo! I've just finished *Myth*. Jealous yeah?! The last level is a shoot-'em-up, which is brill, and Dameron looks cool! Congrats go to System 3, the best programmes in the world. Yah!

Now proper talk. Issue 59 of ZZAP! has improved considerably, as it has almost all the features asked for. But now, something never asked for before: why not give us a mass book with all the tips ever – good yeah!

Oh, by the way, in the ZZAP! previews there is a game called *Black Tiger*. The caption above the screenshot says 'a fight scene in US Golds *Black Tiger* conversion'. Actually it isn't, it is a shop scene so hah, hah Cameron you're wrong (for once).

Why didn't *Myth* get a Gold Medal? It's miles better than stinky old *Armalyte* after all.

Also give my best wishes to Rob, and tell Phil he ain't the footie King – I would thrash him no sweat, so come on Scorelord, let me challenge the *!?!:*!

Well that about Rraps (hah hah) it up for now. Bye
Dominic Williams, Llanelli, S. Wales

Excuse me a moment while I split my sides . . . ah, that's much better. I seem to recall someone asking for a tips booklet before – no, I must be dreaming! As for the Black Tiger *caption, amazingly it wasn't Cam's fault – he only takes the pictures (when he feels like it!). I'd blame it on the Ed, but in his present condition I'd feel a bit guilty. Anyway, it was Ed's fault!*

Phil has had to swallow his pride lately as he's been getting regularly beaten (literally – serves him right, the fouling git) at Kick Off *by Dom of TGM.*
LM

NO HAPPY ENDING

Dear Lloyd
I've got a complaint about *Xenon 2*. For weeks and weeks I have been playing it, slowly getting further and further when finally I got to that big mother ship at the end of level five.

After loads of dodging and blasting I finally destroyed the ship. I started jumping up and down in my chair while swinging my joystick round with excitement. I was expecting something really good to reward my very hard effort but all I got was 'that's all viewers, don't forget to turn off your set'. Then a little white spot appeared in the middle of the screen, making an irritating noise. I was then put right back at the beginning of level one.

Don't get me wrong, *Xenon 2* is a great game which I really enjoyed but they could have made the ending screen much better, as many people would agree.
Jamie Williams, Manchester.

Yes, it's a disappointment to many gamesplayers to get through a really tough game only to be rewarded with a curt message. Perhaps, after going all-out to make a game as tough as possible, programmers are a bit peeved if someone completes it. As a mere mortal I must confess that I've never finished a game, so I've never been disappointed. There's nothing quite so satisfying for a poor player such as myself to see the disgusted look on Robin's face when he sees a pathetic end-screen after (inevitably) completing a game!
LM

ZZAP! RRAP

MERCENARY WOAKES?

Dear Lloyd
With reference to Issue 59 and the review of *Damocles*. As expected the review was excellent, as is the game. However, I am unlikely to know for a very long time as I am a 64 owner, which brings me to the point of this letter. I am sure that I speak for a lot of 64 owners and customers who, I dare say, have paid Paul Woakes's wages for some years. We have waited four years for a sequel to *Mercenary* only to find we are not going to get it.
Now this is where us 64 owners come in. If we let software companies and programmers ignore the 64 then what happened to the Vic 20 will repeat itself. This complaint may be petty now but in two years' time who knows? Congratulations to System 3 who seem to be putting everything into the 64. Companies like this prove there is still years of life in our computer.
Please Mr Woakes, give us our version of *Damocles*. Okay it may not be as spectacular as the Amiga version but we all know your programming capabilities and it's what your public wants.
As for the ZZAP! team I wish to use your influence also. I have backed you since Issue 1; please see that Mr Woakes gets to read this letter by printing it in your magazine. Who knows, with enough back up from your readers maybe Paul Woakes will change his mind. We can not afford to lose programmers of Mr Woakes's capabilities to the Amiga otherwise the 64 is dead already.
C Millins, Plymouth, Devon

I'm sure we all share your sentiments. Unfortunately, Paul Woakes abandonned plans for a C64 version when he decided to write a game which exploited all the Amiga's memory for a very complex program. This still doesn't rule out a cut-down version for C64 owners of course, but Novagen aren't Ocean and don't have masses of conversion programmers. Hopefully Damocles *will be such a massive hit Paul will eventually decide to have a conversion done, so don't give up all hope yet.*
LM

ANY TELEPATHS OUT THERE?

Dear Lloyd
I've owned a C64 for a considerable time now and I've got a wide variety of games from *Evil Dead* to *Batman: The Movie*, but there is just one game that I've been looking for ever since it came out. Wherever I go the shopkeepers say, 'I've never heard of it!' – including Boots, Tomorrow's World, and WH Smith. Please can you tell me if I could purchase it from the Zzuperstore? If not, where else?
James Wilson, Hull HU8 9DA.

Sorry, I've never heard of it – seeing as you forgot to mention what it's called!!
LM

A GRAVESEND GHOST FAN!

Dear Lloyd
I would just like to remind all those fans of the MEGA game *Ghouls 'N' Ghosts* that it wasn't the first; remember *Ghosts 'N' Goblins*? Well I'd just like to say, that *Ghosts 'N' Goblins* is an extremely playable game, and I can't understand why it hasn't been brought out on a budget label, or even rereleased at say, ooooh, about, £6.99. I'm sure it's worth it.
The reason for my letter is that I feel extremely sorry for those who missed it ('Aahhhh's' are heard from the ZZAP! editing room) and would like to give them a chance to get it a second time round perhaps.
Oh well, I'd better get back to my 64 now, I'm playing. . . . yes you guessed it, *Ghosts 'N' Goblins* (Get that loading screen).
Yours waiting for a rerelease,
David Evans, Gravesend, Kent.

PS. The Rrap's cool, why don't you get those boys upstairs to give you some more space in the mag?
PPS. *Ghosts 'N' Goblins* is brilliant (honest!).

I take it you like* Ghosts 'N' Goblins. *You'll be glad to know this classic game has already been rereleased (at a mere £2.99!) and earned a Silver Medal back in Issue 54.

COMPLAINT ABOUT FRENCH LETTER

Dear Lloyd
I feel compelled to write after reading S French's letter in Issue 59. Talk about selfish! 'Just because I don't like the Scorelord and tips get rid of them!' Well pal, maybe you don't like them but you don't have to read them! Thousands do like these features and they should stay!
As for scrapping the Amiga reviews get real! They've been in ZZAP! for over a year; more people own Amigas than ever before (and the number is growing). ZZAP! has managed to support both machines and will continue to do so. Stop being paranoid. I own an Amiga and still like the 64!
As for his gripe about adverts it's not ZZAP!'s fault! If the companies don't advertise that's their business. I'm sure ZZAP! would love more adverts.
Now I've got that of my chest onto some other points:
1. CU. Why do 64 owners still read it? It should be renamed Commodore Amiga User. It seems to forget the 64 completely. And how can you adequately tell what a game is like from black and white screenshots?
2. Would it be possible to do a disk cover as well as a cassette, so everyone can see the demos?
3. Any chance of an interview with Apex/Transmission software?
4. The mag. The layout and presentation is excellent. Of course we all would like more pages but quality outshines quantity. To sum up, ZZAP! is better than ever and easily the best computer magazine. Above all you listen to your readers and respond to their requests. So lads, thanks for 59 great issues. Here's to the next 100.
Cheers
Sean York, Chelmsford CM1 2TP
1. Who knows, especially as it's now gone totally Amiga?
2. Unfortunately not.
3. Robin is 'planning something'.
4. Here's to that as well!
LM

A SICK PERSON WRITES!

Hi Loyd! or was that Lloyd? Anyway, I'm getting rather sick of seeing that *Myth* poster in ZZAP! Why do you put it in? Why don't you show a *Batman* poster all the time instead? Or a *Power Drift* one? Or *Turbo Out Run*?! Or *F29 RETALIATOR*?!!!

OR *NEW ZEALAND STORY*!!!

Calm down Cris, your only going to give yourself a heart attack! Well, something like that anyway.
I just have to say, I'm *$%*!! off with it. No swearing see, Will 'the man' Callaghan. Is Callaghan the name of the place?
Well Lloyd me ol' chum, I think it is very rude (man this oxtail soup is 'orrible!) how 'Art' strips down to his underwear when he gets hit in *Ghost 'N' Goblins*. What's more! When Todd Landers off Neighbours is playing the game, Art strips down to his Y-fronts and shows he's a complete perv to all of the world!
Now I'll get down to the point. OUCH!!! That point's sharp! Did you know that the music that's playing while *Batman: The Movie* and *Dragon Ninja* are loading is really GROOVY!!!! TRENDY!! and CRUCIAL!! COOL!!! (And don't say 'No, but I do now,' because that really cheeses me off, that advert does!)
Anyway, I've got a tenner in my pocket and I'm just going to buy a new game with it. The problem is, shall I buy *Vendetta*, *Renegade III*, *Power Drift*, *The Untouchables*, or *OPERATION THUNDERBOLT*? (Don't ask me why I put *Operation Thunderbolt* in big writing 'cause I don't know. I was thinking about my girlfriend probably and I thought that I could spend my dosh on her). Anyway, which one?
Cris Batstone, Elmesthorpe, Midlands

Personally, I think you should spend your money on a nice comfortable straight-jacket. As for the* Myth *poster, it's actually what we in the magazine trade call an advert (you know, like the ones on telly). But if any other companies would like to put a 'poster' in the mag (and also give us huge wodges of cash), we'd be extremely happy!
LM

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ZZAP! RRAP

OFF THE MAP

Dear Lloyd
Let me start this letter by complimenting your brill mag. I have only been buying ZZAP!! since Issue 56 and already I think it's the most wonderfully colourful mag ever written and is much better than those other mags (ahem).

Now to the important part (well I think so): after reading your review of *Turbo Out Run* I decided to buy it. Having paid and played it and being totally satisfied with it, I realised that in Rob H's comment he says, '. . . even the map at the end of your game is brilliant . . .'

Aha! For nowhere in my game does it show you the map! Please could you tell me where it is?

A devoted ZZAP! fan, Penvale, London.

PS. Anyone out there with a solution to *Batman: The Caped Crusader* part 1? I can only get 25% and I'm stuck, please send 'em in.

Rob H was referring to the disk version which was the only version we had at the time of review. Due to multiload restrictions, the map screen only appears at the very end of the tape version. As for the Caped Crusader listings for both parts appeared in Issue 48 with the complete solution for part one. Maps for both versions, and the solution for part two appear in the following issue. Back issues are available through mail order.
LM

SAUCY SOFTWARE



Dear Lloyd
I just saw the movie: Sex, Lies, and Videotape, when will it be converted to a computer game?
Gandalf!, Denmark

Mmm . . . it would make an 'interesting' tie-in. Unfortunately as far as we know, no software house seems to have grabbed the licence yet. Maybe Ocean's Gary Bracey, who's appeared in US film mag 'Premiere' talking about the relatively sophisticated morality of The Lost Patrol, *might like to give it a try?*
LM

RELATIVELY DISTANT

Dear Lloyd
I know Robin's cousin's auntie's grandfather's uncle's sister's mother's father's second cousin once removed's brother's grandmother's step sister's great great great grandfather's brother's friend. Can I still enter the ZZAP! competitions?
Scott Leach, Hull HU7 4AG

No!
LM

PARDON?!

Mrs M Clare, Flat 1, Regent Court, Regent Road, Ilkley, W Yorks LS29 9EA

Erm . . . did you want to say something? Oh well, thanks Mrs Clare for a very interesting address. I loved the blood-smeared envelope!
LM

A FEW SUGGESTIONS

Dear Lloyd
I thought I must write in, I have made some suggestions to improve ZZAP!. I'm not the first but I thought this would help.
1. Could you bring conversion factor back? I really liked it – you could write it smaller.
2. Have a bronze medal for games with 85%-89%?
3. Do some low-rated games, three on a page? – it would save space.
4. Could you have more ZZAP! Mega tapes?
5. Write release dates by their prices?
6. Could Robin write down which pokes are for the 64 or Amiga?
7. When are you reviewing *Hard Drivin'* for the 64?
8. I think ZZAP! is the best mag for the C64.
Can you print these for my friends please:
Ian C loves Laura M
John F loves Debbie R
Steven M loves Susan P
Choff loves Anne Marie L
Paddy A loves Tanya C
Thanks
James Chan, Liverpool L4 4EH

Thanks for your letter, James.
1. The reviewers feel that the conversion rating often detracted from the overall score that a game received. Anyway, the closeness of a coin-op conversion is always mentioned in at least one of the comments.
2. But surely if we took this procedure to its logical conclusion we'd end up giving anything over 20% a tin medal!
3. Half a page per game is felt to be the minimum space needed for a comprehensive review.
4. Just look on the cover of this Issue!
5. Nearly all games reviewed will be available by the time the magazine hits the streets. 6. Robin says he'll put little '64' and 'amiga' logos (like the ones on reviews) on each tip.
7. When it's finished – the programmers are still working on it.
LM

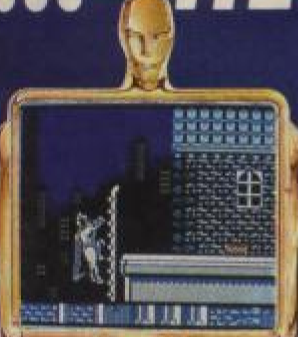
I'm afraid I must leave you now. I'm helping Phil and Robin to dig a tunnel under the Satanic film planning room – it's hell down there. Now where did I put that plastic teaspoon; I can't dig with my hands!

Anyway, keep sending those letters to *Prisoner Lloyd Mangram, ZZAP! Rrap, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB* – maybe I can build a glider out of the paper.

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A SENSIBLE CHAT PART 1

Despite their typically modest name, Sensible Software have long been recognized as one of the most original and successful programming teams around. Games such as *Wizball*, *MicroProse Soccer*, and *Parallax* are C64 classics. While *The Shoot-'em-up Construction Kit* (*SEUCK*) is one of the few game designers to work well, and the only one to work brilliantly. Sensi (as they're known to their friends) are to the C64, what Ultimate used to be to the Speccy.

Robin Hogg undertook the five hour haul to the hamlet of March in East Anglia, to have an expenses-paid five course meal with 'jovial' Jon Hare (graphic genius) and 'cuddly' Chris Yates (programming prodigy). Between burps and slurps their glittering careers were reviewed, and the future previewed.



▲ Chris and Jon contemplate lost royalties on all those Nintendo sales of *Wizball*.

Finding March in March was surprisingly challenging: zooming around East Anglia in a Peugeot 205 revealed more mazes than *Parallax*. But once there I was soon being ushered into the 'legendary' Griffin hotel for a scrumptious meal, with prime steaks all round. As we waited for our starters Jon spilled the beans on their history.

'Sensi Software officially started up four years ago, but before that in 1985, Chris worked on the Speccy conversion of the C64 oldie *Gandalf*. It was jokingly titled *Sodov the Sorceror* [work it out] and the name alone assured the game's moment of success before disappearing into obscurity. Chris did most of the graphics and I helped him out while working on a college course doing nothing – the usual!.'

'I knew Jon from the fifth year of school,' interrupted Chris. 'We formed a band with two other people – 'band' in the gravest sense of the word! I played rhythm guitar brilliantly [of course] and Jon sang – unfortunately – and played lead guitar. We were playing '70s freaky rock music but a bit more enjoyable, sort of like Pink Floyd. The band was Touchstone and we played around the Essex area, but distance forced us to split up a about a year ago.

'After work on *Sodov* Sensi did a stint for System 3, doing a few graphic screens for *International Karate* although Archer Maclean redid them so it was a waste of time. At the time we were working through middle men, LC Software, one of whom was to become a woman! It's weird but a few years ago we found out that the boss had had a sex change! He was Mike before and now he's a Patricia! He could have been called Michaela or something! Very weird!'

The bit-part work continued with static screens for Spectrum *Skyfox*, the forgettable *Flyerfox*, and *Lone Wolf In The Ice Halls of Terror* – 'part two of the *Lone Wolf* series which never came out'. They also did *Twister* (no, nothing to with the very silly 'board' game for contortionists but the notorious *Twister: Mother of Harlots* promoted by lingerie-clad dancing girls!). 'We wrote and developed the program, did everything in fact and then Mark Cale put his name to it, although he actually just sorted out the deal for us,' Jon commented.

'Years back Mark had the storyboard for *The Last Ninja*,' said Chris, 'he asked Jon to do some static screens and graphics for it.'

'But I didn't do anything!' Jon concluded, raising interesting questions about what might have been if *Ninja* had been a Sensi product.

Eventually Jon and Chris heard about a government small business scheme and officially set up Sensible Software in 1986. 'We thought that at least rather than get ripped off by middle men we'd get ripped off a bit less in our own company!' remarked Chris. They'd also suffered with some awkward software houses. 'We did a conversion of *Runestone* in two weeks, didn't get any money for it though – Firebird said it was too slow. It's funny but it was *their* loader that slowed it down! They tried to change it but it didn't work and never got published in the end!'

Galax-i-birds was the first Sensible Software Inc. game, a unique reworking of *Galaxians* with such comic baddies as dodos, budgies, old



IK+ characters, and even a few balls from *Bounder*. *Galax-i-birds* was eventually released by Firebird in August '86. In the ZZAP! review Julian Rignall said, 'To be honest, this game is a load of rubbish, but it's enjoyable rubbish . . . graphics are poor, sound is awful, but I love it!

Amazingly Sensi jumped straight from this jokey budget game to *Parallax*, the astonishingly well programmed Sizzler which eventually appeared on ZZAP! 45's megatape. Asked about the inspiration for the game, Chris said, 'We both saw a coin-op with parallax scrolling, which I can't remember the name of. When we took *Parallax* to Ocean they took one look and signed us up. Six months of toil was rewarded with its release in October of '86.'

And what of the planned sequel?

'We had always planned to do sequels to all our games. Before, it was just a matter of finding the time but now I can't see it happening, we're going to move onto other things.'

But if, for example, Ocean paid them lots of money to do *Parallax 2*, would they?

'Well, money isn't everything! Nine months is a long time to be tied up in any game for us, and we don't want to be left behind [in the advance of software and hardware technology]. We'd have to see.'

Their next game was even more amazing, the Sensi pièce de résistance – the utterly brilliant *Wizball*, which took about nine months to develop. What made them write it?

'Oh man!!' responded Chris. 'Er, well, we wanted a good game with all the best elements of our favourite arcade games. We played *Dropzone* for four months solid, the *Nemesis* and *Salamander* coin-ops as well. We kept going into the arcades and seeing more and more games. *Wizball* took nine months, a pregnancy! The same time to spawn a game!!'

Luckily for the C64 gaming world *Wizball* was no phantom pregnancy and became the cover game for July '87 with a Sizzler to boot, even though it reached the now Gold Medal status of 96%.

I blatantly enquired how much they made for *Wizball*? '£1.50!' came the less than serious reply! Were they still receiving royalties?

'I wish we were!' both cried in unison! The news that *Wizball* was being converted to the Nintendo NES brought a dark cloud of disappointment and frustration over the proceedings – the thought of millions of sales flashed before them and not a yen coming their way.

Obviously they hadn't realised it was going to be such a massive hit?

'After *Parallax* we took *Wizball* to Ocean and signed up with them. They more or less said that they weren't planning for any other format releases and they doubted it was going to sell that well. That's one reason I guess why Ocean are as big as they are, they're very shrewd with a better business sense than us! We certainly didn't know how successful it would be, we just wrote a game that we thought was good; one that we'd want to play ourselves.'



▲ The fruits of success – Chris's beloved Lotus Esprit.



▼ Jon dreams up his next game with a hookah!

Their next project would allow thousands of other people to do something similar: *The Shoot-'Em-Up Construction Kit* for Palace, released in December '87. '*SEUCK* started off as a series of graphic code utilities written by Chris, which was expanded into a construction kit.'

After two hits for Ocean why did they go to Palace? The money?

'No, actually we knew Matthew Timms there, a good friend of ours who's now at Domark. Also Palace are a very honest company, one of the most reliable around.

'*SEUCK* was turned around in six months which was pretty intensive for us with quite a lot of work crammed in.' But it paid off with a Gold Medal, if ultimately no rating!

What of a horizontal scroller version of *SEUCK* à la *Nemesis*, complete with 'multiple' weapons and all that? A *SEUCK 2* perhaps?

'I don't know, maybe. If we did one it would be a lot more flexible with a lot of the boring bits taken out, put in lots of graphic libraries, in fact it would be totally rewritten.' As it happens Palace are certainly interested in a sequel, but nothing is settled as yet with any release date at least a year away.

And what did Sensi Soft think of Amiga *SEUCK*?

'I was slightly disappointed by it,' admitted Chris. 'The scrolling was a little on the slow side but we'll definitely improve on it a lot with *SEUCK 2*!'

With *SEUCK* under their belt, the royalties started to flood in and Jon splashed out on a BMW 535i, while Chris succumbed to the classic programmer temptation and got a Lotus, followed by a Porsche and – currently – a very sporty red Lotus Esprit. Incidentally the Porsche was sold to Martin Galway, the nephew of the famous flautist and a first-class freelance musician who was briefly a part of Sensi.

The offbeat blast-'em budget game *Oh No!* provided light relief after the rigours of *SEUCK*. This was their only '88 release as the company began to work with Origin, the US RPG specialists who recently won a Gold Medal for *Space Rogue*. Sensi embarked on a massive RPG adventure titled *Touchstone* (remember the band?). 'For two years we had been working on the gameplay and story for *Touchstone*, a traditional storyline fantasy RPG but with a twist in it. It became so big and *very* intricate. We originally wanted the player to be able to approach the game through one of the many plots and sub-plots.

'Origin decided that the American market [that it was primarily aimed at] was changing towards the Nintendo consoles. There was no deadline as such but admittedly we weren't making much progress. Origin are good to work with and it was an amicable decision to stop the project in November of last year. The project is now dead but we still hold the copyright and we'd dearly love to see it come to life. The good thing about it is that it's adaptable. As we've worked on the story for eighteen months, and the gameplay for six months, it can be a text adventure, a Cinemaware-style game, even an arcade adventure, whatever – a game to suit the client.' As yet there's no word on any interested software house. Fingers crossed though.

Thankfully their next project suffered no such delays. And in early '89 Jon and Chris rocketed to the top of the 64 programmers league with *Sensi-Soccer*, otherwise known as the classic *Micro-*

Prose Soccer. After the likes of *Wizball* why a Soccer game?

'To tell the truth, there were no good football games around. We'd seen *Match Day 2* and that was alright but we wanted to do a game that we could play, a fun game. It took five months to write, not long but it took a long time to get the cheques through for it! Writs were involved to get the money out of MicroProse and with the departure of a certain person [no names!] from the company we finally received a large cheque. It was very frustrating as we had a lot of bills.' Why did they go to MicroProse, the war sim specialists?

'Well, there was no problem getting people to see the game, we advertised in all the mags as you may remember and got loads of phone calls.'

MicroProse obviously offered the best deal, and surprisingly Ocean weren't all that interested enquiring through a third party but not pursuing the game any further; obviously they thought two football games would have been too much. But as it turned out, even a year on *MicroProse Soccer* is still by far and away the best C64 footie game, beating all the new licence-based releases into the ground. 'In fact, *SEUCK* wasn't the biggest seller for us, *Soccer* was. We're still getting good royalties for it.'

However, they were disappointed with the 16-bit conversions by the Electric Pencil Company (*Zoids, Fourth Protocol* etc). '*Kick Off* probably cost us a lot of money as it was released at the same time, although the 64 version was a pile of crap! [Well, he's honest!] We're not millionaires but we've made other people millionaires!'

'The *MicroProse Soccer* sequel is coming soon in time for the World Cup rush but it's nothing to do with us. Fortunately it's now being called *World Cup Soccer* or something like that instead of *MicroProse Soccer 2*. Not that there's a lot we could have done about it if it *was* called *MicroProse Soccer 2!*'

Their most recent release was of course *Insects In Space*, my favourite game on the superb, Sizzling *Fourth Dimension* compilation from Hewson. 'We knocked up *Insects* in two months over Xmas '88, we showed it to every budget house under the sun but no-one wanted to know. Eventually Hewson took it, but it was a bit weird as Hewson paid for the game and it never came out [until now]. It was planned for their budget label [Rack-it] but they stopped all that shortly after.'

And what on the Rhineland possessed them to write *Insects*?

'It was a bit of fun! Just a bit of a laugh! St Helen Bak, stupid name!'

And the risqué sprite with the big boobies?

'They could have been warts!' Errh, sure!

After lunch, in the 'temporary' Sensible Software den (Chris's house) I was shown the new tennis game that the duo have been working of for a year now. Planned for a mid-year release, Palace are currently finalising the title, which they hope to get a big licence for. And after that?

'I dunno,' Chris shrugged, 'maybe we'll have a few months research and development first, we've already got the basic idea for a new game . . . '



▼ Chris and Jon reliving some of their great moments with Touchstone!

WHAT'S THAT RACQUET?

We'll do a proper preview on the tennis game next month, but for now I can tell you it's an unofficial follow-up to *MicroProse Soccer* with one- or two-player tennis action around the world.

Instead of a look-down viewpoint à la *Passing Shot* with sprites, the game employs superbly animated vector graphic players with triangular heads, which move surprisingly fast. Palace's Richard Joseph has come up with a maddeningly catchy rendition of the Wimbledon title music, but to know more you'll have to wait until next month. Rest assured it's going to be a typically Sensible game in its own Sensible way! But in the meantime I had one last question for Sensi: were they going to take on the new technology and abandon the C64 like others have?

'Well, funnily enough we *were* going to go on about how the C64 is dead and all that malarky but when you think about the sales of the C64 and the Amiga . . . We're going to be continuing for some time yet [with the C64]. The Amigas are pretty good in their own way but the 64 is still good. When parents go into the shops, they don't look at the computers, their hardware specifications and all that, they just look at the price.'

Our thoughts exactly, but what of the mythical C64 console?

'It's a very interesting idea but they'd have to get the price right and of course there's the Nintendo to compete with.'

What came as a surprise to me was the fact that the Sensible Software team don't get to play games that much, particularly their own!! 'We simply don't have the time,' came the joint reply. Chris confessed to playing *Pinball Wizard* on the Amiga (the name of the publisher escapes us all at the time) and also MicroStyle's *Stunt Car Racer*

'*Stunt Car Racer* was good, too good in fact; we had to destroy the disk! There's something about the game that holds the attention, even if you complete the practice courses you still want to play through the game–in fact the computer was too good! That's what we want to incorporate in our games, for the computer to make mistakes.'

A sort of Artificial Intelligence?

'Yes,' enthused Chris. 'Actually, if anybody can show a flair for programming and game design then come to us . . . '

'Yes, come to us,' Jon interrupted, 'if you're young and want to be exploited!!'

Doesn't sound all that Sensible to me, Jon!



THE SENSIBLE HITS

Game	Issue Reviewed	%
Galax-i-birds	17 (Sep 1986)	60%
Parallax	18 (Oct 1986)	93%
Wizball	27 (Jul 1987)	96%
SEUCK	32 (Dec 1987)	Unrated!
Oh No!	38 (Jun 1988)	80%
MicroProse Soccer	46 (Feb 1989)	90%
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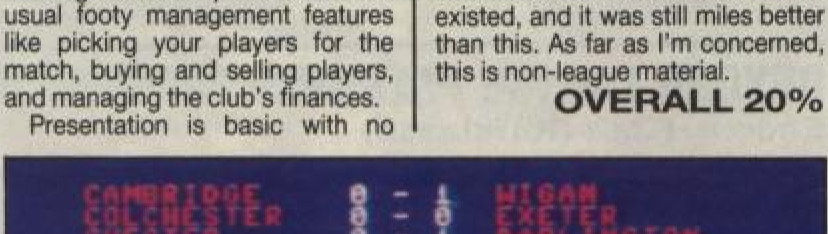
Once you've seen one football management game you've pretty much seen them all. But this latest one from Cult (they've already released a good half dozen) is so old hat it should be in a millinery museum.

You get to manage a rubbishy Fourth Division side with the aim of getting promotion in the League and winning the FA Cup. There are the usual footy management features like picking your players for the match, buying and selling players, and managing the club's finances.

Presentation is basic with no match graphics; not even a text description of the action. No, you just sit there waiting for the score to change. You don't even get to put substitutes on, so you might as well just see the end result. Except you're not allowed; you are forced to watch the clock counting away the minutes.

The original *Football Manager* was released well before ZZAP! existed, and it was still miles better than this. As far as I'm concerned, this is non-league material.

OVERALL 20%





STRIKER
Cult, £2.99

This is just one of three new footy games from Cult. And unfortunately it's definitely the worst, well in the running for 'turkey of the year'.

You play the striker on a football team. Apart from looking at tables of statistics all your options are limited to asking for a transfer to another team, doing some training, or playing in a match. Both training and playing bring up the same ridiculously simple 'arcade' sequence. Your little stick man player stands in front of the opponents' pathetically drawn goal, and you have to stop a direction meter in the right place to score. As the goalie is glued to the spot and can only fall to the left or right, this isn't exactly a difficult task.

However, in a match you may not even get a single chance to shoot. This wouldn't be so bad if you could see the rest of the action, but your view is limited to the empty opponents' goal area – all you get to see is the clock counting down.

If ever a game was akin to watching paint dry this is it. It's a sort of football manager game without the management!

OVERALL 5%

BRITISH SUPER LEAGUE
Cult, £2.99

It's third time lucky for Cult. The last of their trio of footy releases is the only one not to score an own goal.

You get to manage one of the 16 teams in the fictional British Superleague. All the usual management features are included: team selection, buying/selling of players, and finances (instead of getting a bank loan you must ask the club's directors for cash).

The transfer system is one of the game's most impressive features. You can bid for any transfer-listed player from the other teams. Any of your own team's players can also be put on the transfer list. However, you'll have to accept any other team's offer for him – not very fair.

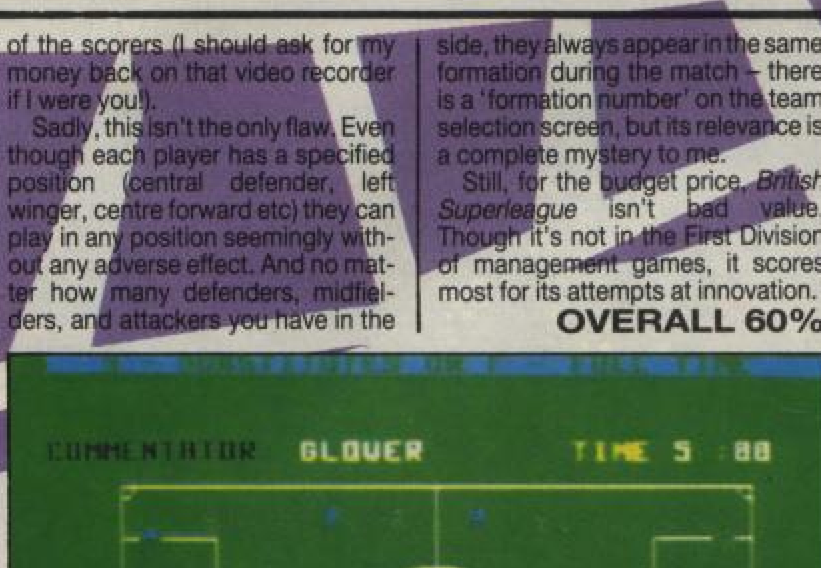
The oddest thing about the game is that the players don't have ratings: the only way to know good they are is to watch them in action. The match display is an abstract one. A plan view shows both teams' completely static players. Strangely, the ball isn't shown; instead the players around its imaginary position flash (without getting arrested). Whichever one gets the ball is then highlighted before he kicks it up the field. Goals are greeted with a spectacular cry of 'GOAL!' from the otherwise silent match commentator. Either of your two substitutes can be put on at any time. And if you find the action tedious, you can skip to the final result.

To scout for new players you can 'record' one of the other matches taking place. However, all you get is a very brief match report screen showing the score and the numbers of the scorers (I should ask for my money back on that video recorder if I were you!).

Sadly, this isn't the only flaw. Even though each player has a specified position (central defender, left winger, centre forward etc) they can play in any position seemingly without any adverse effect. And no matter how many defenders, midfielders, and attackers you have in the side, they always appear in the same formation during the match – there is a 'formation number' on the team selection screen, but its relevance is a complete mystery to me.

Still, for the budget price, *British Superleague* isn't bad value. Though it's not in the First Division of management games, it scores most for its attempts at innovation.

OVERALL 60%



PUB TRIVIA SIMULATOR
Code Masters, £2.99

Contrary to popular belief, people don't go to pubs to meet friends, play darts, or even get drunk. Well at least Code Masters don't. Their ideal pub is frequented by greedy intellectuals whose sole purpose is to win loads of money out of the quiz machine. The punters stick their 10ps in, answer a few easy questions, and – just when they are about to win a cash prize – the machine invariably comes up with a gem like: 'What was the name of the first President of San Marino's goldfish?'

Still, at least you can't lose any real money in *Pub Trivia Simulator*. The only purpose of winning imaginary cash is to extend your credit for a really high score. The questions are all multiple choice – use the joystick to move your hand over either the 'A', 'B', or 'C' button to answer inside the time limit.

Questions come in four categories – Sport, Pop Music, Showbiz, and General Trivia – which appear in a pyramid of question cards. Correctly answer a card at the bottom and you can select either of the two cards above it. Get the top card question right and you're transported to the 'money maze' – another pyramid of questions, but this time some of them carry a cash prize (10p!) for the correct answer.

Despite the conspicuous lack of alcohol in the ZZAP! office, *Pub Trivia Simulator* kept the whole team interested for an afternoon of enjoyable trivia. As with other quiz games the questions inevitably start repeating after a while, but even when they do, the multiple choice answers are cleverly jumbled up to make them appear different. And there are two extra question blocks on the tape, giving an impressive total of 2000 questions to keep any trivia buff happy for a while.

OVERALL 76%

BOING
Hi Power, £2.99

Phweeesh! is the planet of platforms where Phil phinally phlipped! You see Boris, the Big Ball of Bollardia, is trapped there and must be guided across 124 zones of platforms and nasties. He is armed only with a dozen or so bullets and must rely on his 'amazing bouncing powers' to survive. Sadly Boris's leaps are pathetically small and their size remains constant. All you can do is move him left or right to help time the jumps. This makes *Boing* one of the hardest, most irritatingly finicky games we've ever suffered with. While the graphics are okay, with a good variety of whacky aliens from Jaws to swarms of midges, and sound is nice, playability is appalling. A game to be recommended only for those wanting to escape a murder charge by pleading absolute, raving madness.

OVERALL 9%



FAST FOOD
Code Masters, £2.99

You may remember the days when fast food was a pleasure. But now the food has got so fast you have to chase it!

That arcade-adventuring egg, Dizzy, runs around a maze packed with grub for him to scoff. But unfortunately, the monsters which patrol the maze are also hungry and like nothing better than raw egg – they've obviously never met Edwina Currie.

When all the food has been gobbled, Dizzy progresses to the next maze with even more monsters. It's just as well there are some special items to make things easier when collected. These include magic boots to make Dizzy run faster than an Olympic sprinter (much better than steroids!) and various relishes to slow, freeze, or kill the monsters. On the later, harder levels, there are also invisible hedges through which only Dizzy can go.

Fast Food is a classic example of a cheap and cheerful game. Presentation is good with cute graphics, jolly tunes, and ten different inter-level cartoon sequences. And while the action is hardly innovative, it's certainly very playable. Overall this is a far less sickening way to spend three quid than a trip to YukDonalds!

OVERALL 62%



BEYOND THE ICE PALACE
Encore, £2.99 (Rerelease)

The eternal conflict between good and evil continues beyond the ice palace with dark spirits destroying the homes of peasants. A hero is obviously required, and a magical arrow is fired aloft by the spirits of the forest. Whoever finds it will have the power to banish evil from the kingdom.

You're the long-haired guy with a knack for swordplay who sets off to find the arrow. Of course, the evil spirits are determined to stop you and your quest is fraught with danger... such as winged demons, bouncing goblins, swirling dragons, lots of platforms and ladders plus fast-moving lifts. By running over weapons such as knives, swords and firebombs you can swap them for your current weapon. Pressing 'space' calls into action a spirit which moves around destroying baddies in a rather leisurely way.

The game's graphics and sonics are all quite nice, if not exceptional, while gameplay is obviously inspired by *Ghosts 'N' Goblins*. This all promises a very playable game, which is delivered in part, flawed only by a high difficulty level. This was the main complaint in Issue 40's review where the game earned 78%. Since then graphic standards have improved, while the toughness seems too random to be really enjoyable. One for the *G'N'G* fan who wants a challenge, without too much originality.

OVERALL 68%




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WONDER BOY
Encore, £2.99 (Rerelease)

August 1987 was when this Sega coin-op made its C64 debut. Later to be made *Super* in the sequel reviewed last ish, our hero is here occupied with trying to rescuing his fianceé from the evil king and his foul minions. There are four horizontally scrolling backgrounds to be completed, each with a time limit, plenty of baddies, lots of platforms, and a rich crop of bonus point fruit. To help you, there are golden eggs which can be cracked open to give Wonder Boy axes to throw, a skateboard to speed him up, or a fairy which makes him invulnerable for a short time.

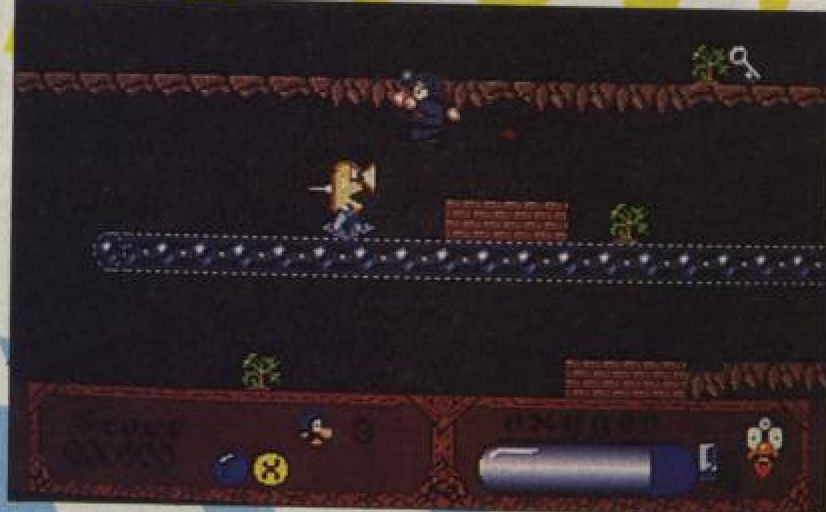
As you'd expect of such a stereotypical Japanese *Mario Bros*-type game, the sprites are all extremely cute and colourful. They're also quite big although this doesn't diminish the need for pixel-perfect jumping. There's a nice variety of backgrounds including a jungle, island paradise, and ice palace. There's also the essential cheery tune, in this case a bit irritating, although it can be swapped for okay sound FX.

Two players can take turns to play, and gameplay is fun enough to make it all worthwhile. On its release the game earned 52%, with coin-op addict Julian Rignall complaining about it being a 'far too easy' conversion of a 'not exactly brilliant' arcade original. But for mere mortals the game should provide a reasonable challenge. The four relatively short levels certainly seem better value at £3 than £10. Well worth a look if you like this sort of cutesy game.

OVERALL 63%







MANIC MINER
Software Projects, £9.99

Miner Willy is back! The superstar collier who became a millionaire in the mines of Surbiton — and subsequently starred in *Jet Set Willy* — has been sent back down the pit for Amiga owners. Once again he must explore the goodie-packed caverns built by a long dead, superior civilization. To complete a cavern, Willy must grab all the objects in it before his air runs out. Besides asphyxiation Willy can die from falling too far, touching a robot baddie, and hitting a poisonous object, such as a bush or spike.

There are two versions of the game: one is identical to the original C64 classic, while the other is an Amiga upgrade. In the latter, only a small proportion of the cavern is shown, with the much bigger sprites jumping around a scrolling cavern. As you'd expect, the graphics are much more colourful and detailed, but like a colourized black-and-white movie, they seem to have lost much of their charm along the way. The music is also disappointingly banal.

Nevertheless the old, hair-pulling-out gameplay remains. The Amiga upgrade is significantly harder with tighter time limits, slightly different alien attack patterns, and the inability to see the whole cavern — this makes the C64 version useful to practice with. Oldsters who raved over the original could well be tempted by this, while younger players could yet be enthralled — if they're prepared to accept mediocre graphics and the limits of the still classic gameplay.

OVERALL 61%

GAUNTLET 2
Klassix, £9.99 (Rerelease)

The original *Gauntlet* was a massive phenomenon in the arcades, proving that you can have four players and fun at the same time. US Gold did the business and converted this arcade smash incredibly well onto all machines bar the Amiga. The coin-op follow-up wasn't quite as good a game, with little in the way of improvements, but this *did* make it onto the Amiga.

Of course, it's all about mass monster slaying on a grand scale as one to four adventurers hack and slash their way through 100 different dungeons. As well as ghosts, grunts, sorcerors, and Death to kill (how do you kill Death?) there's a fireball-spitting Dragon, an IT creature (and its cousin THAT), and other dungeon denizens.

An extremely slick conversion, *Gauntlet 2* even boasts the coin-op's four player option (although you need an interface to get this). The graphics are superbly detailed with snippets of speech too, to add that finishing touch to it all. Unfortunately variety is severely lacking, death virtually impossible with two players, while loading (including interlevel accessing) is unbelievably slow. Enthusiastic fans of the coin-op will like the near-perfect conversion, others may find it a bit boring.

OVERALL 70%



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No 54 Oct 1989
Interview with Power Drift programmer Chris Butler! Randy's Tips Extravaganza! Test Flight - Falcon vs F-16 Combat Pilot! Reviewed: First Strike, Thunderbirds, Tusker, Skate Ball, Team Sports, Shinobi, APB, Xybots, Aaargh!, Paperboy, Jack The Nipper, Ghosts 'n' Goblins, Masters of the Universe, Rescue on Fractalus, Mr. Heli, Xenon 2, Buffalo Bill's Wild West Rodeo Show, Omni-Play Basketball, Strider, Sleeping Gods Lie

No 55 Nov 1989
Pedal to the metal! – an interview with *Turbo Out Run* programmers Probe Software! Phil's joystick round-up! Free *Tusker* poster!
Reviewed: Batman: The Movie, Indy: The Action Game, Continental Circus, Vigilante, Firepower, Star Trek: The Promethean Prophecy, Cosmic Pirate,

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No 56 Dec 1989
The Xmas issue includes an interview with Interplay, an arcades feature, and a review of C64 backup cartridges. Reviewed: Turbo Out Run, Myth, Stunt Car Racer, Interphase, Battle Chess, Cabal, Dogs Of War, North And South, Scapeghost, Shadow Of The Beast, Stormlord, Terry's Big Adventure, and many more!

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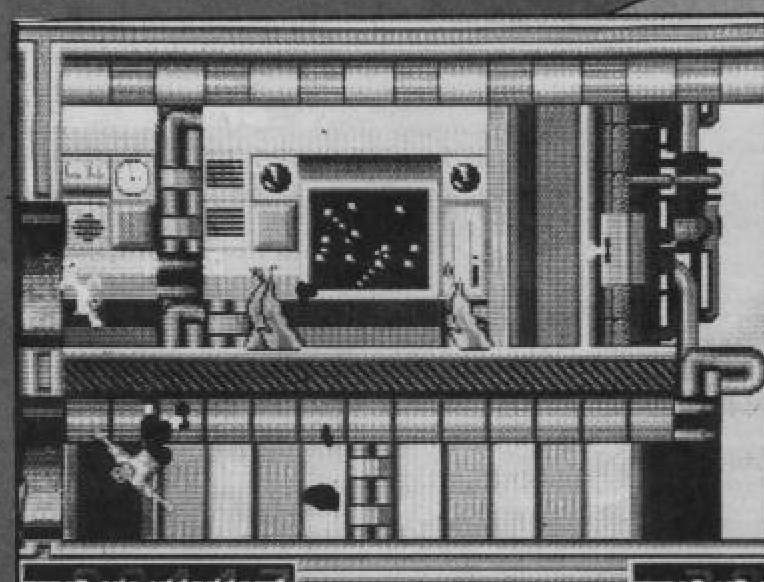
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THE PREVIEWS

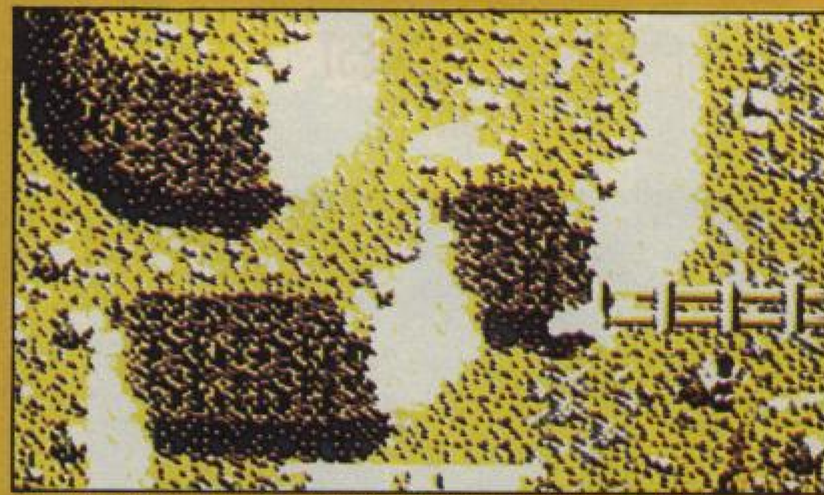
TIME SOLDIERS (Electrocoin Software)

I remember this one well in the arcades, ah yes, fond memories of this one. *Time Soldiers* is SNK's sequel to the *Ikari Warriors* series of games and boy does it look good even now. Two player slaughter is always popular and *Time Soldiers* takes you through six time zones to rescue your five pals from the despicably evil Gylend. Yohan and Ben are the two Commandos with a time travel unit to whizz them back to the past, present and future. The action takes place in Primitive lands, Ancient Rome, Medieval Japan, World War III, the Future (after WWIII? — Ed) and finally the Domain of Gylend. The period opponents are suitably garbed for each level and unsurprisingly all have a grudge against the time-hopping Commandos along with some very, very nasty Big Bosses to really push your arcade skills.

The conversions are being handled by Smart Egg Software (who converted *MicroProse Soccer* to the Z80s) and will be published not by Ocean or Domark, but Electrocoin — THE company for bringing the hottest Japanese coin-ops into Europe. Their dramatic entry into home computer software raises the prospect of hundreds of coin-ops being converted with fourteen years of coin-ops to draw on.

The C64 version of *Time Soldiers* is incredibly fast moving — even faster than the coin-op in fact and plays extremely well. Although the two player mode has had to be dropped in favour of alternate play, all the levels are in there with an impressive amount of detail. The end-level mothers are huge and like *Turrican* this issue, move as if the C64 had a Blitter in it.

The Amiga version promises coin-op perfection and delivers it with simultaneous play, both horizontal and vertical scrolling levels, and even improvements on the arcade machine with extra features, weapons and foes to take out with a vengeance. Take a look at the screenshots here and look out for the game in the shops now. Prices are £9.99/£14.99 (C64) and £24.99 (Amiga) and expect reviews next issue, when the gameplay will be in for us to review.



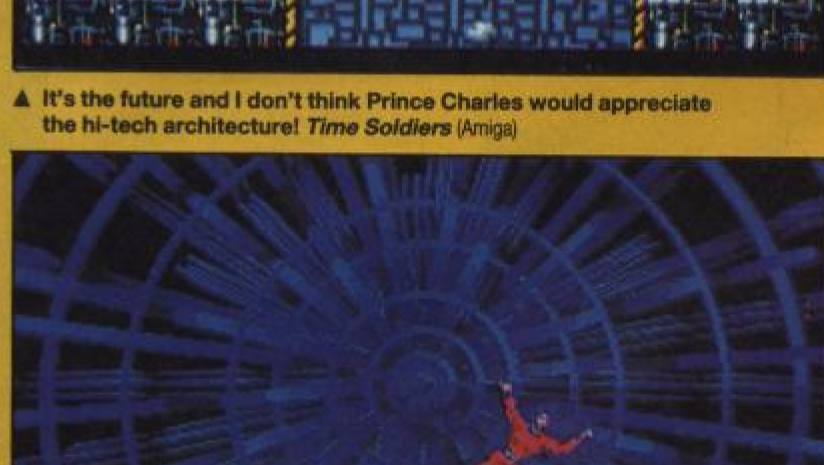
▲ After *Ikari Warriors*, *Guerilla War*, and *Victory Road* comes C64 *Time Soldiers* from Electrocoin.



▲ The graphics are good, but the impressive thing is their amazing speed – Electrocoin's *Time Soldiers.* (C64)



▲ It's the future and I don't think Prince Charles would appreciate the hi-tech architecture! *Time Soldiers* (Amiga)



▲ Spinning through time in the impressive intro sequence in *Time Soldiers.* (Amiga)

FLIMBO'S QUEST
(System 3)



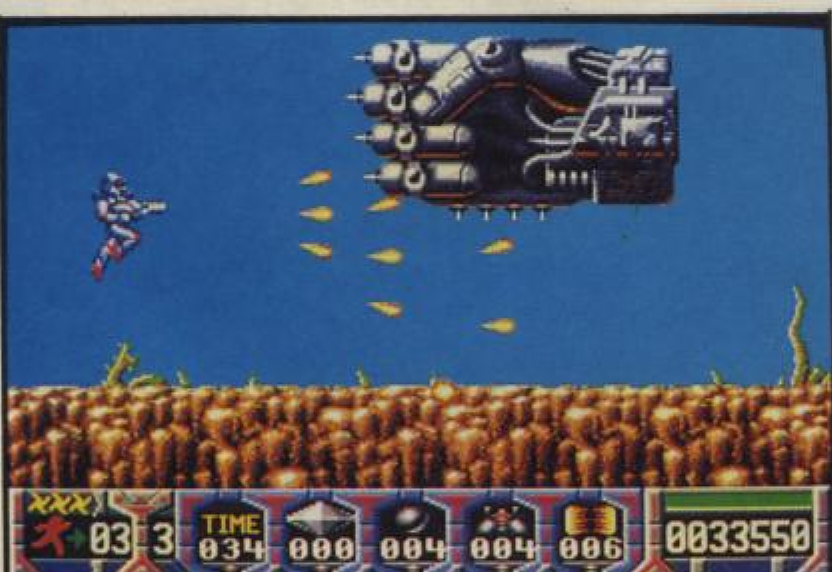
▲ Flimbo is attacked by a pot-bellied creature (could it be Phil King?). (C64)

Well, this is a decidedly oddball game from the company best known for such violent escapades as *The Last Ninja* series, the excellent *Myth* and of course *Vendetta*. *Flimbo's Quest* has been written by a former Boy Without Brains (with shades of *Hawkeye* about it). Flimbo is one seriously cute hero out to get the girl (well, that's original). A mad professor has it in for Pearly, a whiter than white captive girlie, destined for juice extraction (!) by the prof. Seven levels involve moving through the professor's platform land doing in the prof's mutants, collecting passwords and power-ups and nipping in to the shop every so often for some serious upgrading.

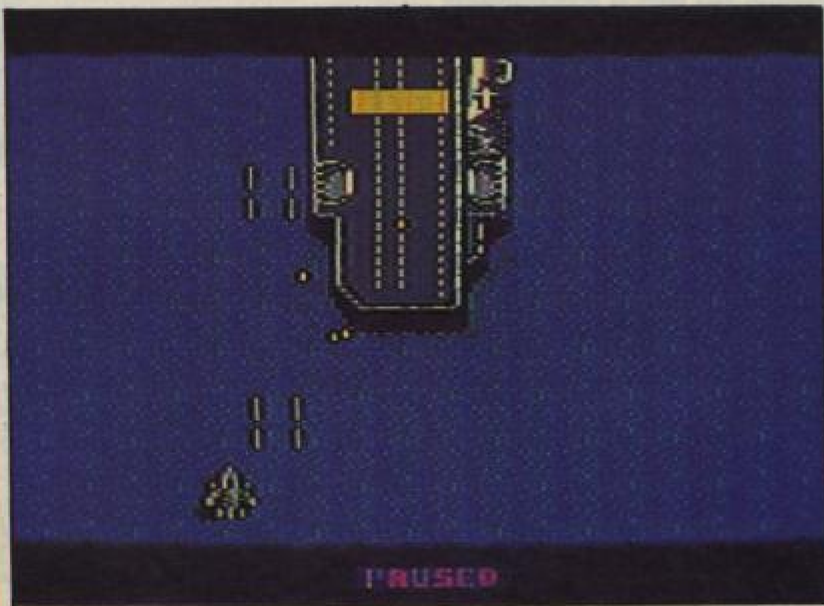
C64 and Amiga owners can become seriously cute heroes in May when *Flimbo's Quest* begins The Search For Pearly.

▼ The brave Flimbo sets off to rescue his girlfriend. (Amiga)

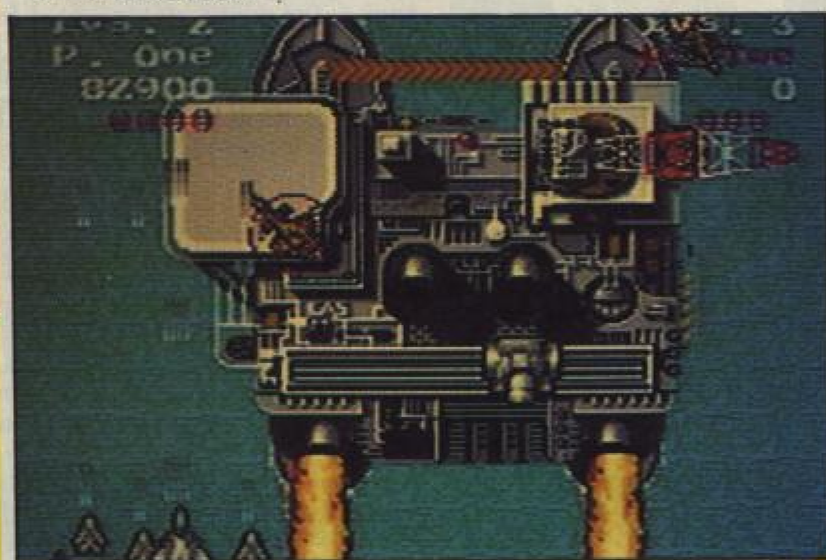




▲ Using multiple fire to hand out some punishment to an end-of-section baddie in the Amiga conversion of *Turrican*.



▲ Making a *Sonic Boom* approaching the aircraft carrier at the end of the first level. (C64)



▲ Don't touch those jet blasters below the oil rig! Amiga *Sonic Boom*

DYNASTY WARS
(Capcom/US Gold)



▲ Slice 'n' dice as two players take on the Joan Collins Fan Club – US Gold's *Dynasty Wars*. (Amiga)

I must confess I haven't played this Capcom coin-op but judging by the Amiga screenshots here it sure looks good. It's a tale of Oriental head chopping, horseback slaughter and Samurai antics. Converted by John Prince of Amiga *Strider* fame *Dynasty Wars* has a simultaneous two player mode, four characters to choose from and eight levels to hack, slash and cut your way through. *Dynasty War* will be available in June for all formats and promises to be full of Eastern promise. But, what no Joan Collins?

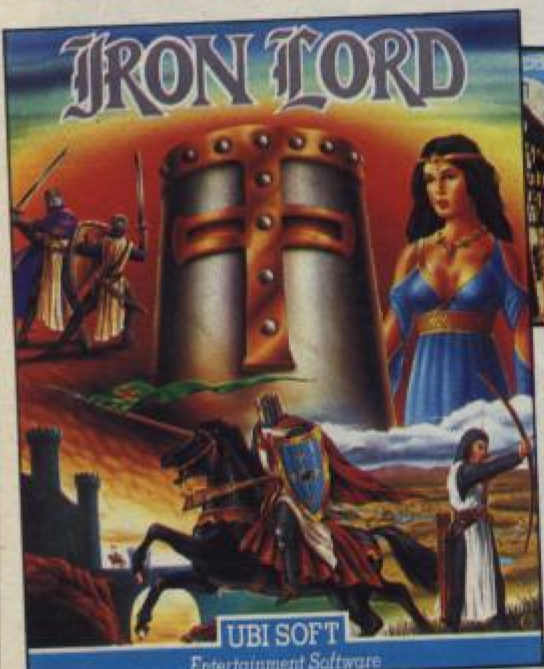
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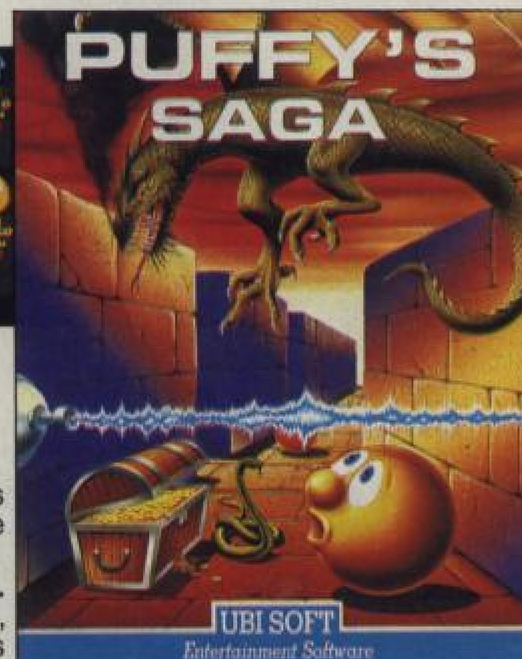
Prove your birthright trough strategy and strength. Amaze the town with your superior archery, arm-wresling, sword-play, and dice-throwing skills. Ultimately, you must build a following that not only respects you, but will go to war for you !

Take charge. Prove you are IRON LORD - The Crusader of Justice !
You owe it to your homeland. Your father, and most of all, to the future of your kingdom !

ACTION

- ☐ Atari ST
- ☐ Amiga
- ☐ C64 Disc and Cassette
- ☐ Amstrad Disc and Cassette



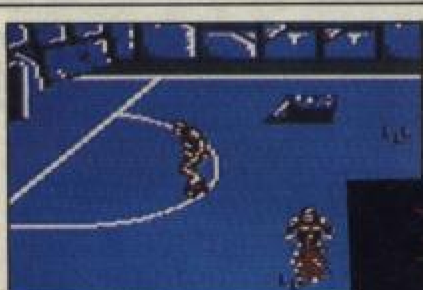


"DON'T GET PUFFED OUT...

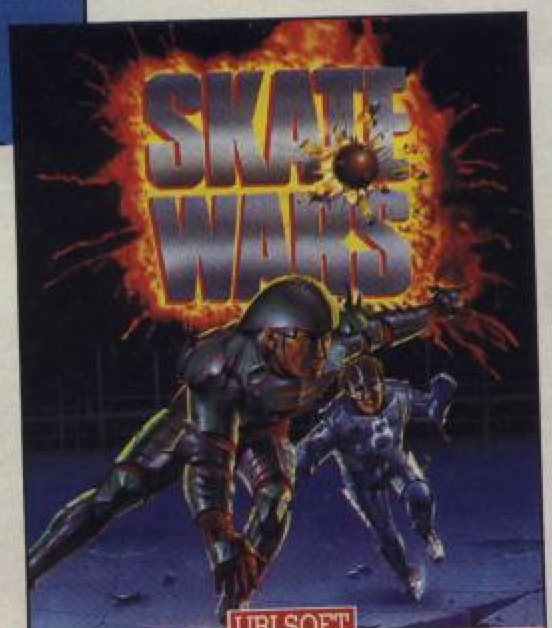
That's the challenge in this addictive arcade-style game.

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- **Choose your character :** Puffy is powerful, but Puffyn has speed !
- **Explore twenty different levels** and settings, each offering passageways filled with demons.
- **Race through the mazes** quickly or accumulate points by each level in full.
- **Enjoy** the colorful graphics and entertaining sound effects.

SPORTS...



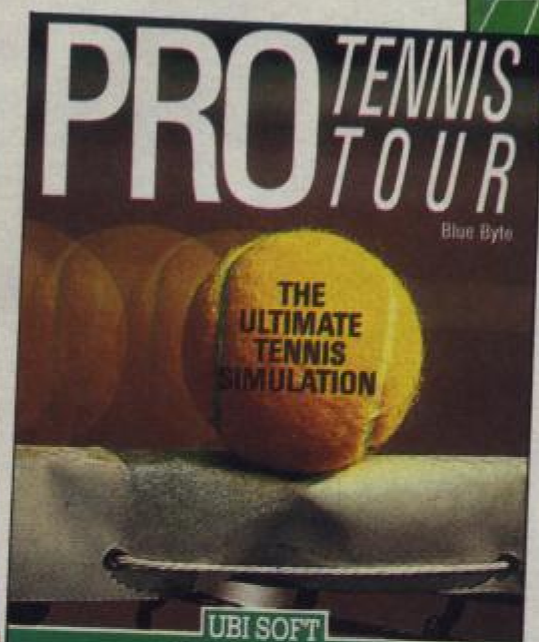
- ☐ Atari ST
- ☐ C64 Disc
- ☐ Amstrad Disc and Cassette



Skate Wars the sport of the future, combines the skills of soccer with the thrills of Rollerball, played in a space age ice stadium ! Lead your team to victory through a series of deadly hazards : crevasses, ramps, jumps, all while competing against the ruthless tactics of your opponents. You'll have to play dirty to win. Maim, trip, push, and shove... show no mercy. Only the brave win, or even survive !

Screen shots represent Commodore 64 and Amiga versions : others may vary Amiga is a registered trademark of Commodore/Amiga. Inc.

- ☐ Atari ST
- ☐ Amiga
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Travel around the world and play at four international tournaments.
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BLINDED BY THE LIGHT

We've moved into the new offices (the stalag by the river) and everything is back to its chaotic level of normality, my desk is becoming increasingly cluttered up and the sun has a nasty habit of shining right in my face through the window (well, the bars) – I think I'll sneakily swap places with Phil while he's fetching gunk from the bleach machine. He won't notice, I've hassled him into getting together some *Player Manager* tips so that'll keep him busy! Enough of this idle banter, it's nice to see *Space Rogue* finally getting some of the tips treatment. Now, does anybody know of any other markedly different solution to the game?

X-OUT
(Rainbow Arts)

This blasting-baby-beauty has been around for a few months now (we were waiting for the C64 version before doing a joint review, honest!) so it's about time for a cheat. Stand up Myles Lockwood **of Brixton, Nr. Plymouth with this cheat for the Amiga game.**

Load the game as usual and choose any of the 4 ships in the shop. Click the ship as usual onto the blue print screen and then choose the Invincible icon (the one below the laser – the one to the right of the orange spiked ball).

Now drag this icon to your ship and click it on and off the ship. Your money increases by 500 units. Drag the icon to the Alien Trash Can and trash it. Carry on doing this to boost your money to your heart's content.

Another way is to choose the most expensive ship and choose the satellite, drag it over to your cash amount just above the Trash Can's head and click once. Your money should have increased by £500,000 and to increase on that carry on using the invincible icon procedure.

N. Mooney **of Birmingham found another very simple cheat.**

While you are playing any level and you're low on energy just press ESC to jump to the next level's shop and you start that level with full energy.

TERRY'S BIG ADVENTURE (Shades)

Try these pokes for that okay-ish *Super Mario Bros* rip-off on the C64. You need a reset poke for them.

Load the game, reset it and enter:

POKE 33082,173 **and** a RETURN **to have infinite lives.**

POKE 39216,173 **and** a RETURN **to have infinite rocks.**

Restart the game with SYS 27904 **followed by** RETURN.

TOOBIN' (Tengen/Domark)

Waz Pilkington **of Manchester pops up again with cheats for the C64 conversion of one of my fave coin-ops of all time. Wild and real toobular!!**

Load the game and reset the C64 with a reset switch.

Type POKE 29836,181 **followed by** RETURN **for infinite lives.**

Type POKE 31734,181 **followed by** RETURN **for infinite ammo.**

SYS 23040 **starts the game going again.**

CABAL
(Ocean)

Steven Kenyon **of Wirral is rather a hard bloke to slaughter people by the thousands AND boast about it to us. He's been playing *Cabal* and here's some dead handy tips for you all.**

◇ **Shoot as many of the buildings as you can as they block your shots at attacking/hiding enemies.**

◆ Shoot the enemies at the bottom of the screen as the bullets they fire need less time to get to you and can often trap you in a corner.

◇ **Don't forget that you can shoot the enemies' bullets!**

◆ Try to pick up the bonuses straight away. The extra 100,200,300 points give are very useful if you want more extra lives.

◇ **Collect special weapons straight away as their rapid fire removes buildings faster, giving you more breathing space.**

◆ The grey uniformed soldiers (the ones that take a few shots to kill) can give a grenade or a special weapon. When he does, two men carrying a stretcher will appear. Shoot these and they will give you two grenades, collect them and then shoot them again before they go, to receive two more grenades.

◇ **Never stay in corners for too long, the soldiers have a habit of zeroing in on you.**

◆ Don't waste grenades on buildings unless you really need to. If you opt to shoot in small bursts at every building rather than concentrating on one building at a time then a grenade may finish the job a lot quicker.

◇ **Try not to get killed when the end-level guardians appear otherwise your FOE meter will drop to zero and you'll have to start again (unlike during the normal soldier blasting action).**

SPACE ROUGE

(Origin/Mindscape)

A classic game from Origin this one whch came as a real surprise to those of us expecting the usual *Ultima*-style RPG fare. Peter Roddan of Swanley in Kent was the first to come up with a solution for this marvel of computer programming, but as we all know there's quite a few ways to reach the end. This solution *should* apply to the disappointing Amiga version as well but I haven't got round to trying it out yet. Stuart McRae of Keith, Banffshire up Scotland way also sent in some handy tips.

Firstly you must get yourself some decent weaponry. After docking at Hiathra go see Orellian, the Imperium Representative and take your Space Pilot's exam. The answers to this are

1) 3.26
2) type 0
3) F=M+A
4) THE IMPERIUM

If you don't have your Space Pilot's licence you can't buy any weapons, shields etc which doesn't help matters.

Talk to everyone on the base, especially VEDA (a green monster). If he sells you some CONTACT LENSES, buy them. Go to the room where CEBAK is (the girl who keeps talking about the greatest coin-op in the galaxy, HIVE!). Inspect the far right SPACE SUIT on the back wall, and you should find a KEY CARD. When you have spoken to everyone, go and see the SHIP OUTFITTER. Buy 4 extra Cargo Pods off him. Then go to the Trader and buy 8 tons of either 1GB RAMS or SUPERCOMPUTERS. If they don't have any of these, don't buy anything.

Next go to the MICON I outpost. Sell the 1GB RAMS or SUPERCOMPUTERS and buy EXPLOSIVES or FORGED Credits. The important thing about smuggling Contraband is to remember to have a different item in your last Cargo Pod. That way, you don't usually get caught. Go and see Sir Eld. He will ask you to do him a favour, so agree to do it. Go back to HIATHRA Starbase and deliver the Statuette to The Imperium Representative. Sell the EXPLOSIVES or FORGED Crs, but NOT SUPERCOMPUTERS or 1GB RAMS. Return to MICON I and talk to Sir Eld. He will give you some useful advice and give you a Stealth Box. Repeat this HIATHRA to MICON I run until you have enough credits to buy a PARTICLE BEAM LASER. Now the fun begins!!

Here you must make a decision. Whether you will become a PIRATE or a BOUNTY HUNTER. Being a pirate means that you will get more combat practise and (most importantly) more money but this also means that every ship you come across will attack you. If you're a Bounty Hunter, at least the Merchant ships won't attack you.

The next item on the agenda is to get more ARMOUR. When you've got 500 of this, and your REPUTE is FIERCE or higher, go and see DUCHESS AVENSTAR at DENEBPRIME STARBASE in the DENEB system. She will give you a mission. Talk to the STUDENT on Deneb who will tell you to go to NAR'SEE and say 'RAKBIT' to one of the ALIENS.

Do this and then go back to Deneb and speak to the student. She will give you a MALIR ARTIFACT. Next go to the BASSRUTI system. Here, go to the MINING STATION. You are advised to save your position before docking with the station as there are rather a few monsters running around the station with an unsociable tendency to tear you limb from limb.

When you have docked, go to the room directly down from the docking bay. A monster should enter here so be careful. You must try to get a table between the monster and yourself and then run through one of the doors. When you are sure that you have lost the monster, go to the room at the bottom left of the station (the one with the SAFE in it) and inspect the CABINET below it. You should find some NSBs. Now go back to the ship and fly to the ARCTURUS system and go to the MICON II MINING STATION. Go to the MADMAN in one of the corridors and talk to him. Select 'OTHER' and type 'NSB'. He will ask you the name of his mission, to which you should reply 'FERRET'. He will tell you to go and see GUT.

Go to the KOTH carrier and use the CARD on the LOCKED DOOR. Avoid the ALARM SQUARES and go and inspect one of the squares on the TOP WALL. You will find the TRANSMUTATION COIL as long as you have bought the CONTACT LENSES off VEDA (did you remember to do that earlier??).

Go back to the BASSRUTI system and soar through the vacuum to the FREE GUILD OUTPOST. Go to CHI-SHA and say you are a ROGUE. Select 'OTHER' and say 'LUX-23A'. Agree to help her and she will come on your ship as a repair droid. Go and see OMAR and demand to see GUT. He will tell you to go and destroy a TITAN first. This 'small' task is not too difficult as long as you have 500 ARMOUR and decent shields. When you have done this, go back and talk to GUT. Explain KOTH's plot and he will tell you to go and see a BAAKILI FAR TRADER. Say to him 'MANCHI' and offer him the MALIR ARTIFACT. When you have recieved the information, go and see GUT again. He will tell you to go to TROCHAL to steal the CHI-GONGER back.

First, go to the MICON IV MINING STATION in the ZED N27 system. Once at the station search behind the locked door until you find a PSIONIC SHIELD. Then, go to the TROCHAL OUTPOST in the SIGURE system and go to see VILANIE. She will ask you to remove the shield – DON'T! She will call the guards so quickly unlock the DOOR in her ROOM and inspect next to the EGG. Pick up the CHI-GONGER and go back to GUT. Then go to ZED N27 and talk to PROFESSOR PROSK. Give him the TRANSMUTATION COIL, and ask him for the NULL DAMPER. Explain about the EGG and enter in the CO-ORDINATES "GC 3409". Go to the NAVIGATION CONSOLE, and set course for the MANCHI HOMEWORLD. Dock here, turn the disk over and look at the pretty pictures.

TIPS

Use the map to get through the Bassruti Mining Station, if you start getting wandering around the monster may sneak up and have you. It's a fairly thick monster and escape is possible.

LOADED FOR MANCHI

Don't think about becoming a pirate or bounty hunter until you're armed to the teeth, Naturally the most expensive laser is the best (the Particle Beam); they're very effective at cutting up Manchi and other baddies. Initially, buy the Sapphire laser first (if you can afford it) and then upgrade to the Particle Beam later. Plasma torpedoes are effective, cheap and compact so buy around six of them and seven Nova missiles.

AROUND THE GALAXY IN 80 WORMHOLE JUMPS

To enter a wormhole you must fly through the Malir Gate with a minimum velocity of 21 ms. You don't have to enter it by flying through a hole at either end, you can fly through the sides with no damage to armour. Avoid Ion Storms like the plague if you're carrying perishable goods like Brandy and Radioactives. A reasonable wormhole speed is between 15 and 22 ms, practice the sequence and you shouldn't have any problems.

Detour around any Shard fields that you find in a system, things get difficult if you're attacked by Manchi or pirates while navigating a Shard field, avoid Nebulae or Asteroids where possible.

ADD-ONS FOR YOUR SHIP

The turbo thruster is useful, especially if you regularly have full cargo bays which make your ship sluggish and lethargic, but the thruster isn't necessary.

Armour plates are worth the money, to get maximum armour you'll have to buy four armour plates. Put them top of your shopping list and buy them when you can afford them! After buying them, you have to select Repair Armour from the repairs desk. E.C.M.s are handy for fights with Titans and Corsairs. Like the Turbo Thruster, though, they're not essential.

GOOD CAREER MOVES

Other ships may be friends or foes, depending on what career path you take. Becoming a bounty hunter is dangerous but very profitable. A bounty hunter will get attacked by every Dart or Corsair in his vicinity and a well equipped ship is essential. Being a pirate puts a bounty on your head and you can expect Cruisers, Hunters, and the awesome Titans attacking you.

Provided you can find a profitable trading route, being a merchant is the most lucrative way of surviving although Darts and Corsairs may attack.

DOGFIGHTING IN THE VACUUM OF SPACE

Manchi will always attack you no matter who you are, the resulting battle is ALWAYS a fight to the death as they never surrender or give up the fight. The *Elite* equivalent of these pain-in-the-rears are the Thargoids. Ask the Imperial Captain if you want news on Manchi. Wasps are easy to kill but Vultures are a different matter, only moderately well equipped ships stand any chance against them. Getting attacked by two (or even three) Vultures is rare but invariably lethal.

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RETROGRADE
(Thalamus)

Well, the trials of *Retrograde* continue with Apex providing the tips and motherships and familiar tipper Andrew Roberts **of St. Helens, Merseyside providing the maps. Gives me less work to do which is rather handy.**

Level 4

With level 4 comes some new obstacles: rooves and walls. Rooves restrict access to the planet surface and walls stop you from roaming the ground at your own leisure. First go to the shop and upgrade your fist to power four. This is absolutely VITAL or you can't complete the level (bit sneaky that. . . . .).

You will notice some new weapons, including the 'Zenith'. This is the ideal weapon for defeating the level 4 nerve centre since it fires directly upwards, but you can use a radian if you prefer. Again, there are only two ducts on this level: one very short and another extremely long (my, that's a big one). The ground aliens which leave behind planet busters are a blue squidgy pumpkin in between two pink walking eggs and a grey bloke to the left of the first duct.

Hey – is that coffin ready yet??? Yes, you are onto the fourth big bad boss and surely facing certain death. . . .

You must first destroy the cunningly hidden guns marked 1 and 2 on the piccy (shoot from the left). Whizz around to the other side and take out guns marked 3 and 4, avoiding those lazer death bolts. Next, whizz back to the left and decimate the first 'power generator' (5 on the piccy) and, once again, whizz back round to the right and devastate the second and last power generator (6). The spark at the bottom will become sparkless and void of all sparkability – well, it will disappear allowing you access to the centre of the nerve-centre. Blast the eye at the top (7) with either your Zenith or Radian (should be a Zenith you spineless wimp) and shortly the moronic marauding monster will cease to be (yes – it's DEAD!).

So, there you have it. Four down and three to go. We leave Dan Damage zooming through space to planet number five. What awaits him there? What evils will he face? And how ridiculously accurate will the missiles be now? By the time the next set of tips is out you tape users should have level five loaded (if you're lucky). Before we go, we would just like to let you know the current high-scores for a single level 475,545 – and the entire game (without the cheat) – 1,217,005 – both by Steve and both easy to beat!

'What cheat?' You cry out as one. Well, it's about time now and anyway quite a few people have found it including Leigh The Man **of Romford,** Steven Porrin **of Woodhouse, Sheffield,** Andrew Roberts, **and** Chris Brown **of Kelso.**

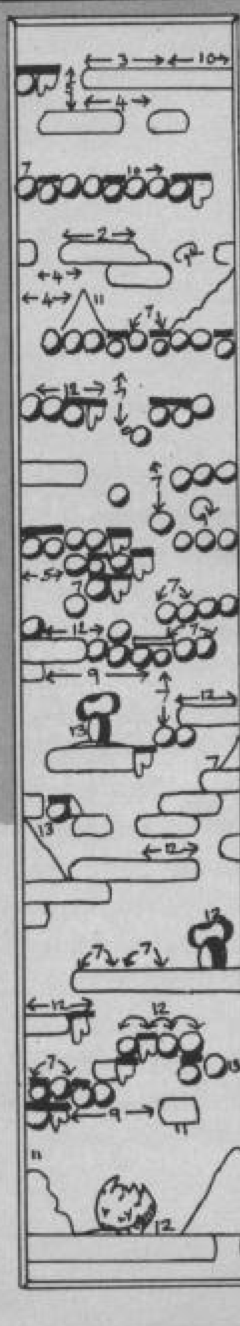
To get this dashed clever cheat to work switch on your C64 as usual and put the disk/cassette in the drive/tape deck as usual but DON'T start loading it yet! Instead, move the on screen cursor down to the bottom line of the current screen using the cursor keys, move the cursor along a bit and type I HATE BROS (complete with the two spaces). Now use the SHIFT and INST/DEL keys to move the sentence across into the corner so that the S of BROS is touching the bottom right edge of the screen, now hold down SHIFT and Cursor Up/Down to bring the cursor back up to the line you started on and back to the position it started from. (Under the READY. statement).

Don't worry about the mess of graphics left behind just on no account must the screen scroll up otherwise the cheat won't work. Now with this prepared, just type the usual LOAD statement as per usual and leave the game to load. When it does, lo and behold! you have infinite energy (no infinite cash though). It's a clever one that has been done before in one of the *Monty* games. When a new game is started if you quit or complete the game from then on all upgrades are free once just one grade is bought, you can also position the weapon anywhere (providing there's enough power points left).

For all those disc users with OCEANIC disk drives who have been experiencing problems in loading *Retrograde*, we can now give you a program which will solve your loading blues . . . Type in this program, save it off to a blank disc to use later and RUN it, ensuring that your *Retrograde* disk is in the drive.

```
10  POKE 53265,0: POKE 53272,197: POKE 648,48
20  X=X+1: IF X=1 THEN LOAD "L",8,1
30SYS 850
```

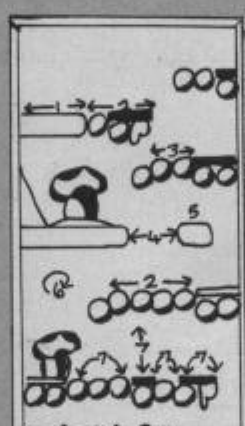
Leigh has found a cheat for extra points. When you have completed a level put your joystick on autofire or let the time run out and you find that your energy bonus will not stop. A cartridge poke POKE 50374,173 is worth trying if you have an Action Replay cartridge or similar dongle.

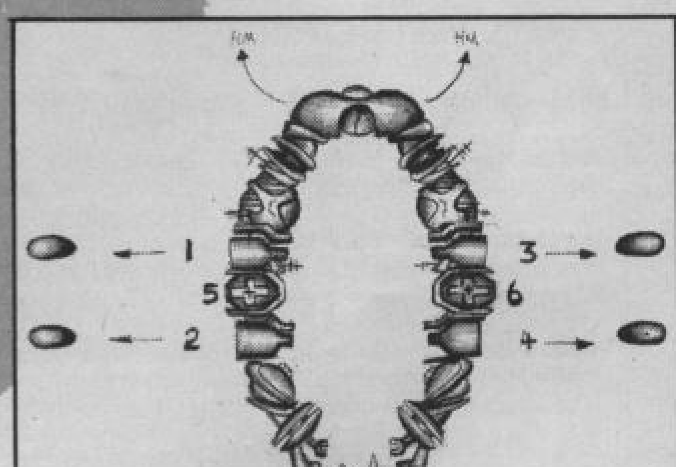




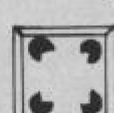
THE CAST OF ALIENS

1. Blue Troll
2. Red Troll
3. Green Troll
4. Mine
5. Spinning Planet
6. Glowing Balls
7. Live Fungi
8. Yellow Troll
9. Grab Crab (?)
10. Walking Pumpkin
11. Pod
12. Bouncing Head
13. Side Flyer





FLYING WEAPONS



ATOMIZER

Positions:	3/7/11/15
Inc:	2▶
Cost:	500
Max:	16
Points:	2



ZENITH

Positions:	1/9
Inc:	3
Cost:	750
Max:	21
Points:	2

LEVEL FOUR – MAGIC MUSHROOMS MAN!

Compiled and drawn by Andrew Roberts (C)1990 ▶

TYPHOON THOMPSON
(Broderbund/Domark)

Cute, very cute indeed. Dan Gorlin returns to bring a smile to our faces with the best animation I've seen in a long while. To help you wipe the smile off those brilliantly animated sea sprites here's some handy tips.

◊ **Get used to how the hover craft's attitude affects its movement. Pushing forward on the mouse coupled with thrust is best for reaching top speed while pulling back on the mouse together with thrust puts the craft in reverse and forces it into the air (handy for avoiding nasty flyers). Pulling the craft back allows you to fire further into the distance (sometimes helpful, sometimes a hindrance). It's best to stick to drifting around without the thrusters, it's easy to thrust into danger or accidentally dive under the water if you're not careful.**

♦ Shoot one island at a time and lure the Flyers that emerge from it away. Once the sprites are loose in the water they can be devilishly quick at getting back to the island. The further away they are when you hit their flyer, the better your chances of getting them all. If one flyer gets back then the sprite 'counter' resets and you'll have to start again.

◊ **Try not to let flyers get behind you, especially dangerous ones like the Zapper. If things get too much, dive underwater and lob freeze bombs from down below.**

♦ Don't go mad on the old firing-the-laser business. One shot is enough to destroy a flyer and any further shots tend to hit the sea sprites that come out even further away. Even worse is a stray shot that hits other flyers throwing yet more sea sprites into the water. As the sea sprites are identical in looks, there's no way of knowing from which island they come and hence you can't go about stopping sprites from getting back to their islands. This is NOT a good thing!

◊ **Never forget how sickeningly intelligent the Flyers are. The nastier breeds of Flyers like the Zapper and Spitter will home in on the player if sea sprites are in the water, bubblers will dish out more bubbles as you draw near.**

THE WEAPONS

Laser Cannon – Absolutely essential for everything.

Scatter Bombs – Best to use a scatter bomb to get rid of bubbles surrounding your target; also good for splitting up groups of flyers.

Sprite Magnets – Upon killing a flyer throw a good few sprite magnets around; even if the sprites change they'll still hang around the magnets before it expires.

Freeze Bombs – If the Zapper, Whomper, and their friends get TOO close hit the freeze bomb to halt them. Firing at them while frozen has the same effect as a laser cannon, hitting them into the distance.

THE MISSIONS

'Bring us the Dagger!' - A dead easy level introducing you to each of the different Flyers in turn. One sprite controls each flyer so unless you *really* cock it up the collection of the seventh sprite should see you get the Dagger.

'Bring us the Hammer!' – Again no major hassles but this time it's 14 sprites in total, now 2 flyers pop out of each island with 1 sprite in each at the controls. Make sure you're not caught between two kill-on-contact flyers and you should be okay. Kill any Zappers, Suckers or Forcers first.

'Bring us the Balloon!' – The problems continue to double with 28 sprites to be picked up, 2 flyers appear from the islands with 2 sprites in each. No real advance in difficulty over the Hammer level except that you've got twice as many sprites to pick out of the water. Still, it's good practice for the last two levels.

'Bring us the Pacifier!' – Last but one level and the hardest but one for difficulty. 42 of the pesky sprites form your objective. Now we have 3 flyers per island with 2 sprites in each. From now on it's best to draw them away from the islands and hit them one at a time. It's a long haul but you will do it.

'Bring us the Baby!' (Whooo!) – The ultimate challenge as all hell breaks loose with 3 sprites for every one of the 3 fliers in each of the 7 islands (so that means for the final challenge you've got to collect 63 of the pesky sprites!). There's little new about this level other than the increase in sprites so you now have to draw them even further away from their islands. Now just sit back and watch the neat animated sequence (well worth the effort).

THE FLYERS

Bumper – The bumper is normally little more than a nuisance just bashing you around for kicks. The only worry you've got with this one is that he could hit you into a Sucker, Zapper, Bubbler, or anything else which is a little more lethal. Luckily this is a rare event if you keep the Flyers spaced out when taking them on.

Whomper – A dangerous fellow as he moves like the clappers and is difficult to pin down for long range shots, he's even worse when close up as he homes in on you with frightening accuracy. Get him at long range and you've got no problems. Its a short and fat flyer making for an easy target.

Forcer – Get two of these together and you'll have some real fun desperately trying to hover in a straight line. Alternatively, hit with a freeze bomb from below and fire a close range shot at him.

Sucker – Obviously the opposite in effect to the Forcer, fire from long range, and if the little beggar gets too close thrust away (never backwards), dive for cover, hit the scatter/freeze bombs, in fact – do anything! You have a few seconds to get away but that's all.

Bubbler – This nasty piece of work can multiply your problems at the drop of a hat. Use the scatter bomb to clear the sea ways of vicious (?!) bubbles.

Spitter – Like the Bubbler, long range flyers are the worst of them all, the spitter being no exception. Use the long range shot facility to pick them off. If they fire thrust back immediately together with a slip to the left or right. Spitters fire at your last targetted position so a move away should lose the spit.

Zapper – As nasty as he sounds, one touch loses you both a life and a hover craft and you most definitely need them later on. As he's low in the water you may miss him a few times, launch a freeze bomb to stop him and fire a long range shot to finish him off. On no account let him get near!!

Well, that wasn't a massive tips section this month but it was small and perfectly formed, size doesn't count and all that. A 'Nice Try' award goes to Waz Pilkington **for sending in the *complete* solution and maps to *Rainbow Islands* (already!!). A crying shame it arrived just too late to be included. I want EVERYTHING you've got on Rainbow Islands so get mapping, there's a £30 software voucher in it for the best – music hacks, cheat modes and secret message hacks would also be most welcome. I'll give you a few months to get something together so don't delay! I'll have some *Infestation* and *Midwinter* tips. An *E-Motion* solution, hopefully some *4th Dimension* maps, cheats, and stuff and hell, maybe even something on *F-29 Retaliator* (I'm ready to give up on ever seeing that one come out!) Send in your stuff to our new address at *PIG IN A POKE, Stalag ZZAP!, Newsfield, The Case Mills, Ludlow, SY8 1JW.***



Ah, what a lovely new office I've got in this lovely stalag by the river. And at last those feeble reviewers have been put in their place; in a tiny cell between TGM and the Ad department (sheer hell!). By the way, the next person to call me a pillock will join them.

For extra comfort the ZZAP! cronies have got a brand-new drinks machine which serves pure bleach at £5 a time – no more wimpy drinks like tea or Britvic 55 as its use is compulsory! And for that authentic 'alien mothership' feel, the rooms are lit by 20 Megawatt searchlights, so the idiots can't hide from me as I peer at them through the one-way mirrors.

Of course, with the combined cacophony coming from their noisy neighbours, the reviewers soon resorted to playing very heavy metal on their personal stereos – a practice soon abolished by a proper democratic decision, ie mine. Maybe Earth isn't such a bad place, after all!

4TH DIMENSION (Hewson)

Cyberdyne Warrior
17,835 Phil King, ZZAP! Towers
15,125 Stuart Wynne, ZZAP! Towers
14,925 Rob H, ZZAP! Towers

Head The Ball
33,660 Rob H, ZZAP! Towers
29,220 Phil King, ZZAP! Towers
26,550 Stuart Wynne, ZZAP! Towers

Mission Impossibubble
82,500 Stuart Wynne, ZZAP! Towers
57,000 Rob H, ZZAP! Towers
53,000 Phil King, ZZAP! Towers

Insects In Space
106,070 Rob H, ZZAP! Towers
34,730 Stuart Wynne, ZZAP! Towers
18,690 Phil King, ZZAP! Towers

ALIEN SYNDROME (Ace)
362,500 Bret 'Cool' Crossley, Rothwell, Leeds
259,500 Martin Lindsay, Geraldton, Australia
223,610 D Emmins, Stratford, London E15

BATMAN: THE MOVIE (Ocean)
1,478,470 Niall Hatch, Killiney, Co Dublin
1,283,780 Richard Bentley, Haworth, W Yorks
982,280 Chris (Megablaster), Rijswijk, Holland

(Amiga)
769,400 Chris (Megablaster), Rijswijk, Holland
573,460 (Completed) Alan Mitchell, Radcliffe, Manchester
534,128 (Completed) Jamie Aldron, Manselton, Swansea

BATTLE SQUADRON (Electronic Zoo) (Amiga)
2,235,075 Liam Asher, Belper, Derbys
2,144,875 Jimmy Gustafsson, Sweden
1,750,400 Steve Packer, Chelmsford, Essex

BLOOD MONEY (Psygnosis) (Amiga)
349,880 Chris (Megablaster), Rijswijk, Holland
340,000 (Completed – Again!) C Hall, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne and Wear
284,150 (Completed) John Cockell, Wakefield, W Yorks

BUBBLE BOBBLE (Firebird)
9,384,260 Ian Moglan, Somewhere
8,693,110 Phil Hutchinson, Heage, Derbyshire
8,692,430 Richard Pembridge, Wirral, Merseyside

CABAL (Ocean)
206,615 (Completed) Chris Campbell, Nottingham
166,720 'Mad Man Mark' Ashton, Manchester
150,491 (Completed) Ronald 'Radical' Pettit, Banstead, Surrey

CHASE HQ (Ocean)
18,860,520 (Completed) Michael 'Ens' Nicol, East Kilbride, Scotland
11,091,969 (Completed) Brian Leahy, Co Cork, Ireland
10,339,013 (Completed) Richard Green, Hadley, Telford

(Amiga)
9,999,999 (Completed) Martin 'The Mittin' Calladine, Reading
7,240,560 (Completed) Casey Gallacher, Reading
4,421,420 Ian Perryman, Plymouth

CITADEL (Electric Dreams)
1,445,479 (Completed 12 times!) Bjo-n Halen, Helsinki, Finland
1,237,750 Mark Clements, Kettering, Northants
745,920 Andrew Roberts, St Helens, Liverpool

CYBERNOID (Hewson)
576,280 Chris (Megablaster), Rijswijk, Holland
276,400 Dean 'SJT' James, West Bromwich, W Mids
238,430 Donovan James, West Bromwich, West Midlands

DARK SIDE (Incentive)
6,520,420 (Completed) Martin Lear, Shelley, W Yorks
6,130,726 Kuddly Bix, York, N Yorks
5,860,626 Colin Fulton, Ayr, Scotland

DENARIS (US Gold/Rainbow Arts)
1,562,320 (Completed) Chris (Megablar ter), Rijswijk, Holland
1,404,849 (Completed) Stephen Blidgeon, Wythenshawe, Manchester
1,253,510 (Completed) Katamati and Ookrio, Heston, Middx

E-MOTION (US Gold) (Amiga)
Level 29 (76,950) Rob And Phil, ZZAP! Towers
Level 7 (46,200) Wozza, TGM Towers

FIGHTER BOMBER (Activision) (Amiga)
(Missions completed/flown)
13/26 Supersonic Stu, ZZAP! Towers (F-15)
13/27 Mad Bomber Hogg, ZZAP! Towers (Viggen)

FIRST STRIKE (Elite) (Amiga)
168,800 Mikael Johannesen, Hvidovre, Denmark
163,000 P Alexander, Lincoln
73,300 Rob H, ZZAP! Towers

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS (US Gold)
4,039,450 Mark Williams and Bryn Lawlor, Middlezoy, Somerset
4,020,100 Daniel Julien, London
4,014,300 Andy Wiltshire, Lacock, Wilts

HARD DRIVIN' (Tengen/Domark) (Amiga)
70,576 (Time – 1:37.99) Andrew Rowley, Billericay, Essex
41,445 (1:49.58) Stu Lindsell, Brentwood, Essex
30,280 (2:08) Rob H, ZZAP! Towers

HAWKEYE (Thalamus)
8,679,230 Chris (Megablaster), Rijswijk, Holland
5,625,380 David McKenzie, Dennistoun, Glasgow
3,505,100 Johan 'The Joker' Jonkers, Venlo-Blerick, Holland

KICK OFF (Anco) (Amiga)
Argentina: 42pts, 1st – Steve 'Rad' Adkins, Münster, W Germany
Brazil: 36pts, 1st – Paul Taylor, Billericay
England: 42pts, 1st – Matthew Thomas, Wellingborough; Trevor Haynes, Cramlington
France: 36pts, 1st – Trevor Haynes, Cramlington
Holland: 42pts, 1st – Matthew Thomas, Wellingborough; Arjen vd Wetering, Holland
Italy: 40pts, 1st – Matthew Thomas, Wellingborough
Russia: 42pts, 1st – Stephen Kennett; Matthew Thomas, Wellingborough; Jani Koskinen, Finland
Spain: 34pts, 1st – Trevor Haynes, Cramlington
W Germany: 36pts, 1st – Trevor Haynes, Cramlington

MYTH (System 3)
59,126 (Completed) Graeme 'Tensed-up' Fairchild, Brentwood, Essex
35,000 (Completed) Ronald 'Radical' Pettit, Banstead, Surrey

NEW ZEALAND STORY (Ocean)
Completed (624,300) Stral, Holytown, Motherwell
Completed (548,400) Nick 'Tiki' Evans, Portsmouth
Completed (513,100) Nicky Paulin, Torrington, Devon

(Amiga)
Completed (2,171,860) Neil 'Robb The Dude' Robinson, Rothwell, W Yorks
Completed (810,936) James Gibson, King's Lynn, Norfolk
Level 5-3 (422,516) Ged Keaveney, Shelley, W Yorks

NINJA WARRIORS (Virgin)
203,540 (Completed) Edward Fletcher, Ashton-Under-Lyme, Manchester
161,170 (Completed) Steve Bellamy, Basingstoke, Hants

(Amiga)
143,050 Jimmy Gustafsson, Sweden
120,600 Marcos 'The Muke' Simpson, Northwood, Middx
107,450 Roboninja Hogg, ZZAP! Towers

OPERATION THUNDERBOLT (Amiga)
2,856,800 (Completed) Casey Gallacher, Reading
2,571,200 (Completed) Daniel Besser, Bletchley, Bucks
2,389,600 (Completed) Luke Alton Staveley, Derbys

P-47 FREEDOM FIGHTER (Firebird) (Amiga)
242,764 Phil King, ZZAP! Towers
209,342 Ian Perryman, Plymouth
152,700 Rob H, ZZAP! Towers

PIPE MANIA (Empire)
393,550 (Level 31) Mike Vine, Dagenham, Essex

(Amiga)
109,000 Jimmy Gustafsson, Sweden

POWER DRIFT (Activision)
884,960 Phil Halliwell, Shotton Colliery, Co Durham
884,640 Ian 'Tiger' Gough, Gorseinon, Swansea (Hello from Penllergaer resident, Rob H!)
881,900 Johnny 'Well 'Ard' Smith, Bath, Avon

(Amiga)
1,972,382 'Andy's Mum', Seaford, Essex
1,969,393 Steve 'St Ivel' Gee, Wakefield, W Yorks
1,943,628 Philip Sutcliffe, Nottingham

QUEDEX (Thalamus)
1,023 Mr Anonymous, Anonyville
1,015 Matthew Hall, Victoria, Australia
1,010 Craig Archer, Victoria, Australia

RAINBOW ISLANDS
368,422 Simon Binns, Marske, Cleveland

(Amiga)
2,334,960 Stuart Wynne, Ludlow Hospice
1,812,700 Rob H, ZZAP! Towers
1,450,100 Steve Packer, Chelmsford, Essex

RETROGRADE (Thalamus)
1,253,060 (Completed) Paul Kumar, Stafford
1,240,320 (Completed) Martin Coyle, Nottingham
1,148,865 (Completed) William Callaghan, Tipton, W Mids

RICK DANGEROUS (Firebird)
317,400 (Compelted) Chris (Megablaster), Rijswijk, Holland
257,300 (Completed) Casey Gallacher, Reading
31,190 Simon Phillips, Greenfield

(Amiga)
744,550 (Completed) Casey Gallacher, Reading
14,000 Daniel Besser, Bletchley, Bucks

R-TYPE (Electric Dreams) (Amiga)
259,900 (Completed) Andrew Rowley, Billericay, Essex
255,700 Pintel Tomer, Ramat-Gan, Israel
248,300 (Completed) Lee Ellershaw, Blackpool

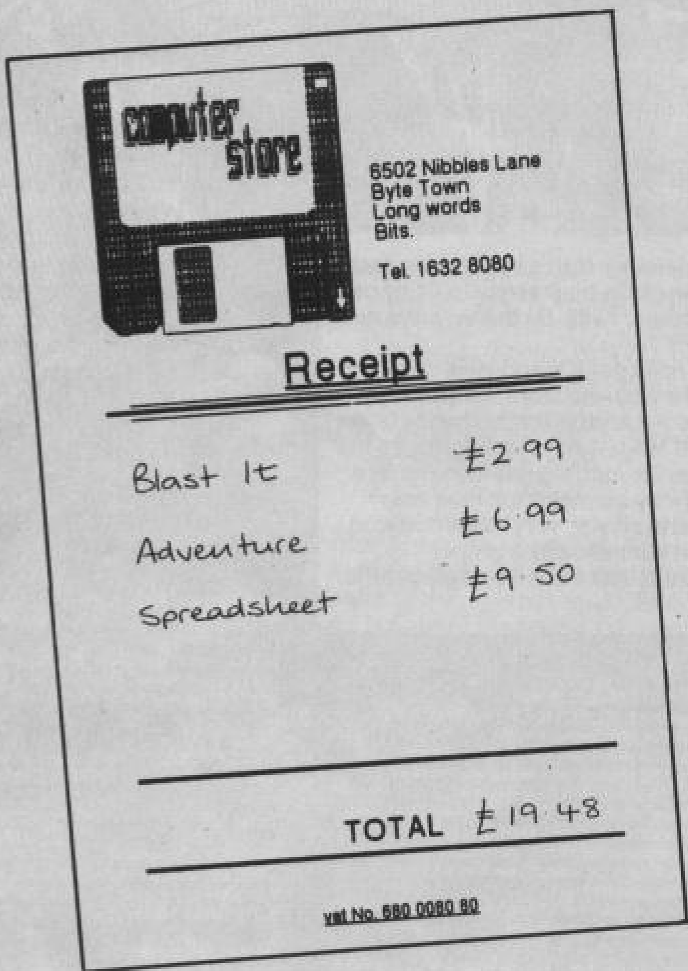
SAMURAI WARRIOR (Firebird)
3,850 Bret 'Cool' Crossley, Rothwell, Leeds
3,427 Richard 'I love Basildon' Archibald, Basildon
2,926 Karl Green, Acklam, Cleveland

TEST DRIVE 2 (Accolade)
289,700 (Completed) Mike Vine, Dagenham, Essex

(Amiga)
392,432 (Completed) Matt Heaton, Berkhamsted, Herts
367,800 (Completed) Mark van Geijtenbeek, Heersum, Holland
327,296 (Completed) Sami Jussila, Jyvaskyla, Finland

TURBO OUT RUN (US Gold)
16,360,000 'Mad Man Mark' Ashton, Manchester
16,310,000 (Completed) Rob 'Road' Hogg, ZZAP! Towers
15,530,000 Johan 'The Joker' Jonkers, Venlo-Blerick, Holland

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THE BIG MATCH



ZZAP! CHALLENGE

Our beloved Editor (who I have a great friendship with and have never, ever said anything nasty or threatening about, Constable) lies ailing after a murder attempt, and I am determined to humiliate the remainder of the ZZAP! team. Imprisoned in the gleaming stalag by the weir, their morale is low – especially the Phil creature who has been banned from drinking his coffee gunge.

My challenger this time is Brendan Phoenix, a boldly named thirteen-year-old from Crumpsall, near Manchester. His letter bravely daring Phil to a challenge on *Kick Off* arrived before the last issue was even finished! I was a little concerned about his youth – especially as Phil has played this game everyday of his life since getting it – but his record was impressive. Phil's best performance against the computer, was to win the league with Argentina, earning 26 points. Brendan has won with 27, and his confidence is high!

Brendan arrives promptly at 12.30, appropriately dressed in a tracksuit and a properly fierce Iron Maiden T-shirt. Phil instantly thinks that here might finally be someone who shares his appreciation of Alice Cooper, only to be informed Brendan doesn't like him but his Mum does! The tubby reviewer, inevitably wearing his burgundy jumper (which hides the wine stains), groans as Brendan brings up Alice's early '70s hits!

After a long, three-hour trip down to Ludlow Brendan asks if he might have a brief warm-up game? The cowardly Phil reluctantly agrees and the first friendly begins. Within seconds Phil is displaying his customary dirty tricks, hacking down one of Brendan's players as he is going for goal. 'That was nasty,' Brendan complains then watches in disbelief as yet another of his players is savagely taken down. 'You have to resort to this?' he asks. Due mainly to Phil's fiendish fouling the first half ends nil:nil.

The second half begins with white lines down the centre, one of a number of tiny bugs in the 'arcade game of 1989'. Sneaky Phil tries to make use of the distraction, but Brendan blunts his attack and gains possession. Player nine leads a brave run right through the middle and puts away a brilliant goal after just 30 seconds. 1:0.

Barely a minute later Phil goes for a similarly direct approach, beating a defender to find the net. 1:1. Brendan storms back with a volley of shots at the goal, all miraculously saved by a speedy goalie. One of Phil's men abruptly falls down, setting up a free kick as Brendan protests; 'I don't foul, it was a bug!' The free kick is rocketed towards at Player 11 who runs forward to score. Twenty seconds later another of his players gets clear – making use of the fact there are no offsides in *Kick Off* – and only excellent goalkeeping saves Brendan. 'Looking for an equalizer in injury time,' Brendan says making a bold forward attack. But Phil stops it, shoots the ball forward to an opportunistic striker and scores. 3:1. 'I need a few practices before I get on form,' Brendan mutters before I leave to get some Vim from the dispensing machine.

The second warm-up match sees Brendan removes his tracksuit top. He plays with his own Kempston joystick: even though the left fire button doesn't work he says he prefers it to the sabotaged ZZAP! ones the cunning Phil wants him to use. The game begins and after two and a half minutes Phil hits a long shot which flukily goes in. Brendan claps – is he mad? – 'What a goal, have to hand it to you there,' he exclaims. I've heard of this kind of sporting behaviour, but I've never seen it. When TGM's Dominic Handy plays Phil he keeps up a constant stream of distracting, insulting comments and kicks Phil whenever he makes a foul – which is every other minute. I hope I haven't made a mistake with Brendan . . .

My pathetic worries are soon put to rest, with Brendan winning a corner kick from which to score a great equalizer. The Clee Hill sheep herder isn't discouraged though, and strikes back with his own goal. But before the grin has faded from his begrizzled, unshaven chops Brendan has put together his own neat play which ends with him equalizing. 2:2. Phil grumbles something, but doesn't look worried . . . until Brendan breaks through his defence, runs toward the left goal post pulling the goalie over so he can turn and snap it to the right. 3:2.

Fierce end-to-end footie culminates in Brendan conceding a dodgy penalty from which Phil scores. Irked by the dodgy decision Brendan gains possession, makes a beautiful long pass and scores. 4:3. Phil tries to come back, but succeeds only in making an own goal. Half-time result, 5:3.

The second half is a much duller affair, until with just a minute left Phil scores. '5:4, he still might be in it,' Brendan murmurs before winning a penalty with two seconds left – and winning the game 6:4.

A coffee break is announced so the players can rest their aching arms before the best-of-three contest. Brendan tries out some psychological warfare, boasting about great scores on his fave games – *Blood Money* and *Operation Thunderbolt*.

But once the first match has begun Brendan is worried, 'It's for real now . . . I don't feel confident in this game.' His fears are soon justified, with one of his players



▲ The rotund reviewer puts on an innocent expression after committing a cynical foul – 'Not me, guv!'

doing a sliding tackle in his own penalty area and Phil running over him to try and win a penalty. Fortunately he fails. A bloody battle in the midfield follows, with plenty of hard tackling on both sides. Phil breaks out with the ball, but misses his chance. Another rush forward draws a foul and a free kick, Phil is clear to shoot but misses by a mile. Our jeers inspire him though, and by some miracle he scores – 1:0. 'I've got to equalize before half-time,' Brendan says and just in time gets his chance, only to be cynically hacked down in the penalty area. Brendan scores from the penalty.

Phil uses the centre kick to make a break down the right wing, passes it in and scores to win congratulations from Brendan for his skill. Brendan rushes Phil's penalty area, but in the resulting scramble he misses.

The second half begins impressively with Brendan almost scoring, but then he very nearly hits an own goal. A trio of excellent shots on Phil's goal follow, but Phil's goalie is superb. Brendan's defence isn't. Phil hits his goalpost sending the goalie left, the ball rebounds and one of Brendan's defenders shoots at his own goal – hitting the post and giving a corner! Phil soon exploits his weakness with a goal, 3:1.

Brendan responds with a brilliant angled goal, 3:2, then gains possession to force another scramble in Phil's penalty box. 'Crikey,' exclaims Phil. Sadly, Brendan misses and Phil gets the ball out to the midfield. One of Brendan's defenders intercepts it in the penalty area and tries to bring it to the goalie. Phil nips in and jammily scores! 4:2. The Clee Hill Pub Crawler is tempting me to do the same to him as the Edit . . . eh, uhm, just joking. Ho, ho!

A post-match interview reveals Phil's recipe for success – a good, computer-controlled goalie. Brendan is still fuming about that backpass as his biggest mistake.

RESULT:
CLEE HILL ALCOHOLIC GLEE CLUB 4
FIERY PHOENIX FC 2

Phil begins the second match by switching from his standard 5-3-2 formation to Brendan's more attacking 4-4-2. Feeling cocky he boasts about how confident he is. Brendan admits he's 'unconfident': the pressure is really on him now since if he loses this he's out of the game. Brendan has the first and second shots on goal, but Phil survives and rushes back, passing into the penalty box for a quick goal. Brendan shakes off his fears and roars down the field. One of his strikers makes an acute angled shot from outside the penalty box to score a dream goal. 1:1. A gleam comes into his eye and he turns to me to ask which issue this is going in, then scores an own goal by carelessly pulling back on the joystick to cause a disastrous flickback!

'I was going to win if it wasn't for that,' he moans, 'I want a corner, need that corner now!' Sure enough one of Phil's defenders knocks the ball back, but a goal kick is given. 'Replace the ref,' Brendan shouts with my bellowing agreement. But then he's brought down outside Phil's penalty box and makes a good goal. 2:2. Phil attacks back, and uses a throw-in to pass horizontally into the penalty box – 3:2 – 'brilliant goal' says Brendan.

A bit of midfield tussling follows, ending with Brendan hopelessly shooting from the half-way line. Phil's goalie yawns as the ball slowly approaches, closes his eyes, and GOAL! 3:3.

Half-time and Phil goes back to his 5-3-2 formation. Brendan complains that he hates 'kicking down the pitch'. And sure enough Phil scores straight from the kick off. 'What skill,' murmurs the sadly over-generous Mr Phoenix. 4:3.

What foul play, say I as Phil promptly brings down Brendan in the penalty box to stupidly concede a penalty. 4:4. Yet soon after, a simple accident by Brendan results in one of his players getting a yellow card: 'I think he's bribed the ref.' With 20 seconds left to go Brendan passes down to the right wing, passes in and player 9 puts it away. 5:4. 'Oh no!' groans the so-called King of *Kick Off*.

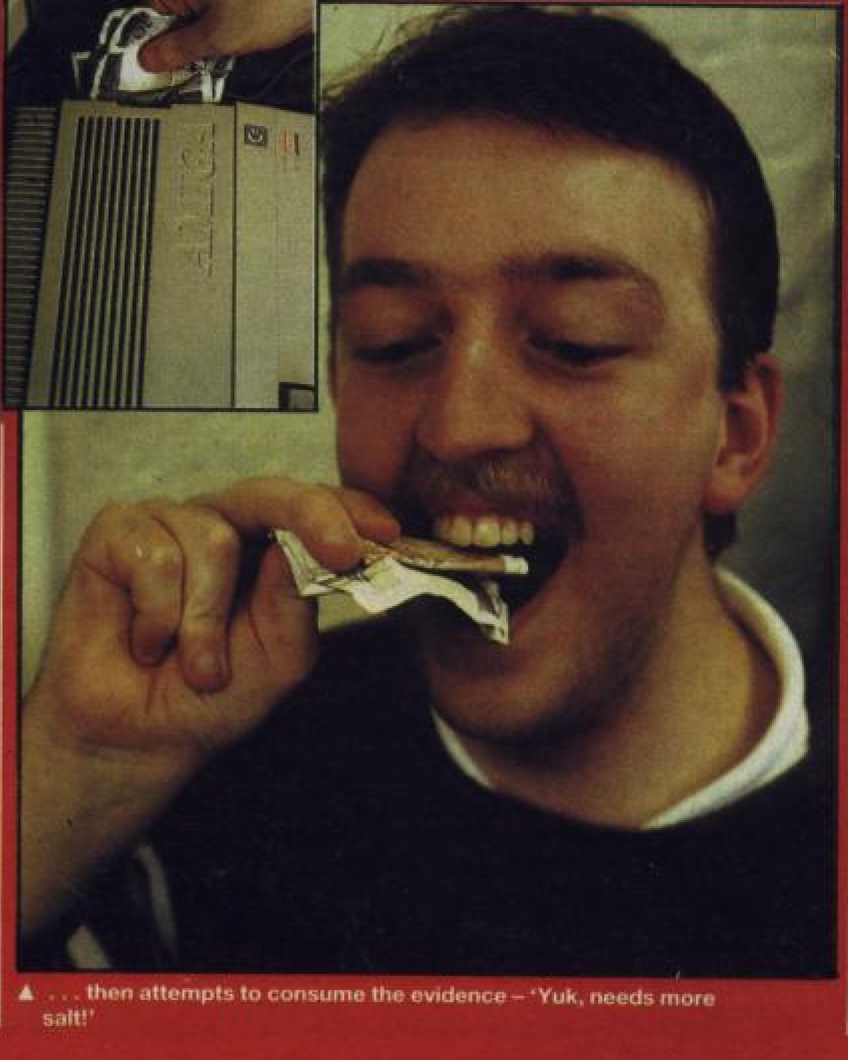
RESULT:
CLEE HILL ALCOHOLIC GLEE CLUB 4
FIERY PHOENIX FC 5

A short break follows so everyone can catch their breath. Brendan asks about *Man Utd* on the Amiga, a subject which inspires a host of jokes about the beleaguered team. Brendan insists he's a Liverpool fan, but their computer games have been even worse. The subject then moves on to his local library, where such Amiga games as *F-18* and *New Zealand Story* can be hired out for 10p a week. Unfortunately some typically fiendish humans were swapping the labels on the disks and keeping the best games – sounds like Phil to me!

As for *Kick Off* his main opposition is his dad, who's okay but once he scores a goal he keeps boasting about how great he is so Brendan easily wins. His Mum's no better, but not as bad as best friend Matthew 'The Rubbish' Miskell, who owns a C64 and whose newest game is *Mr Wimpy*! Brendan's favourite C64 games are *Ghosts 'N' Goblins* and *Bubble Bobble*, but most of his friends own Speccies who keep boasting about superb graphics with *three* whole colours!

After coffee Phil gets off to a good start, using a throw in to make a setpiece goal. 1:0. Brendan comes straight back with his own goal as the theme tune of *Neighbours* comes wafting over the the TGM/ZZAP! partition from Dominic's yuppie portable TV. Phil goes forward from the centre kick, crosses in and scores – 2:1. Brendan fights back, earning a corner but Phil's fouling denies him a goal. 'What a dirty player this man is,' he exclaims. Phil scores

▼ 'With blatant bribery the self-acclaimed 'footy king' gets the ref on his side . . .



▲ . . . then attempts to consume the evidence – 'Yuk, needs more salt!'

from a corner as Brendan cries, 'That's a foul, he's so dirty, should be disallowed.' I can only agree and look forward to banning air from this cosy stalag if Phil keeps playing like this. 3:2.

Brendan makes a snappy reply on the field, equalizing, then goes back on the attack only to be fouled in Phil's all ready blood-splattered penalty box. A penalty is called, but no sooner than Brendan's player is in position, the half-time whistle is blown – demonstrating yet another *Kick Off* bug. What unbelievable luck the beer-swilling Cleeite is enjoying!

Brendan makes two great shots at goal, only to be denied by amazing saves. 'So lucky this guy,' he murmurs, gritting his teeth in determination. A blistering attack through the middle ends in a great goal. 4:3. 'Two minutes to go,' Brendan whispers wishing it were all over, but it isn't and Phil gets another of his flukey goals.

Following some fiercely contested football Brendan establishes total control over Phil's penalty box. He crosses over the goal mouth no less than five times, before Phil's nerve breaks and he brutally fouls Brendan. A penalty! He's going to win, there's only a second or so left. Victory is mine, it's all over! The whistle's blown, I don't believe it, how could such a cruel bug deny Brendan again?

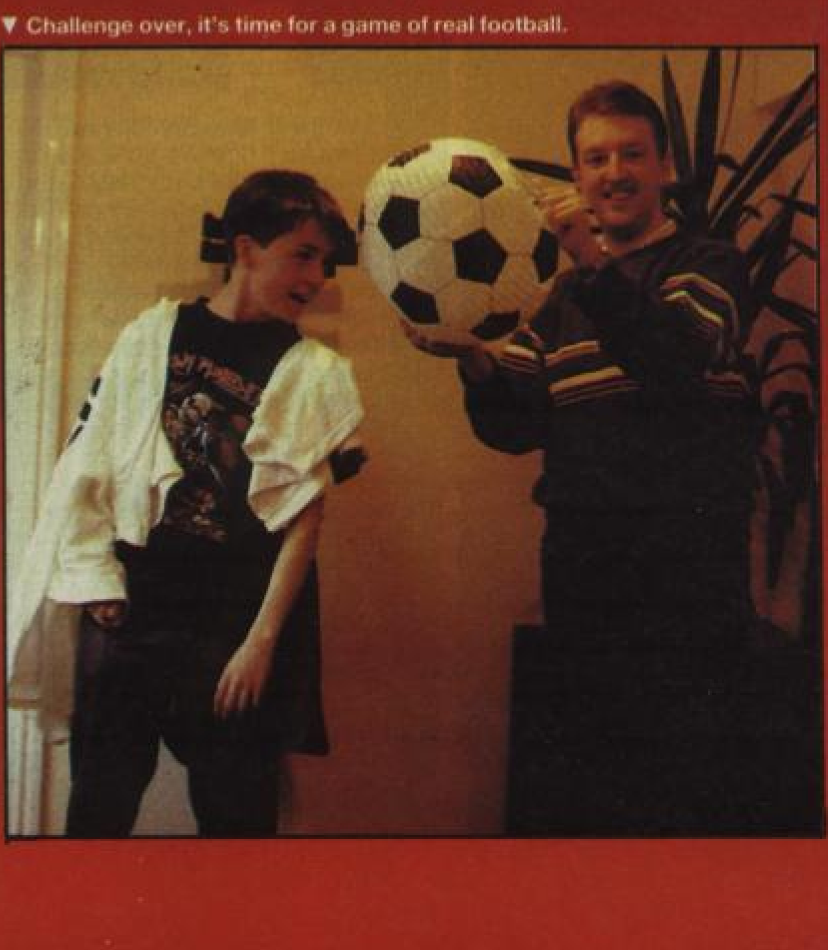
RESULT:
CLEE HILL ALCOHOLIC GLEE CLUB 4
FIERY PHOENIX FC 4

Brendan begins the replay glumly, convinced sneaky Phil's bribed the ref. Phil wins the toss and decides to start going down (which is slightly harder), so he can come back – if need be – when going up in the second half. 'I'm going all out for a two-goal lead,' Brendan confides, aware of Phil's tactics. He makes a good shot on goal, but Phil is lucky again, and the goalie saves it. He rushes toward Brendan's goal and draws a penalty which he puts away. 'He's won it,' murmurs a despondent Brendan, clearly exhausted after his long trip and three tense games. I quickly encourage him, I'm positive a good bit of play now will finally shatter the alcoholic's nerve. But too late, Phil hits another goal. 2:0. He gleefully rubs his hands together.

Brendan puts together a neat play, but once again is denied by Phil's super-goalie. 'Best chance gone,' Brendan glumly remarks. Come on, I say, Phil's already got the DTs. 'I've got a feeling if I got one, I can equalize,' he says. But as it turns out Phil is next to score, a corner into his penalty area sees one of his defenders walk the goal into his own net! 2:1. Clearly rattled Phil's eyes flick around, looking for some meths to slurp. Needless to say he steps up his dirty, fouling tactics. But these backfire when he gives away yet another penalty! 2:2.

Time is slowly ticking away and with less than a minute to go it looks like there might be *another* draw. The tension is unbelievable but then, with just thirteen seconds to go, Phil somehow scores – 3:2. It's all over, but I cannot believe the sheep herder's luck. I can't ever recall such a close contest, such brilliant play from such a young player and so many lucky flukes saving the ZZAP! person's bacon. Two disallowed penalties is unbelievable and in fact I consider this something of a victory. Of all the games played by anyone on ZZAP!, none has been played more than *Kick Off* and the brilliant Brendan Phoenix has, in my opinion, won a great victory. After this magnificent campaign I am sure total victory can only follow in the next challenge. In the meantime I congratulate Brendan again on his astounding performance.

▼ Challenge over, it's time for a game of real football.





KICK OFF: The Game

Phil's all-time favourite game was reviewed in ZZAP! 50 – just before he joined the team. Even though the game earned a well deserved 96%, a certain 'arty' person (who will remain anonymous) made a mistake by putting a Sizzler logo instead of a Gold Medal on the review. So please, no more letters: it *was* a Gold Medal!

***Kick Off*, of course, is a simulation of football, with the arcade action taking place on a scrolling, overhead-view pitch. The game includes an international league of eight teams, practice options, and one and two-player modes. There are several different refs ranging from the blind C Winchester to red card-happy E Boylan. Before non-league games each team gets to choose from five levels of play which determine the speed of the players – for the challenge, both players were on the fastest international level.**

The game is also famous for its many quirks (also known as bugs!) including strange white lines which obscure the middle of the pitch, a little white man who appears behind the goals, time running out before a penalty can be taken, and goalies who seemingly go to sleep, only to be awakened by the ref's whistle. Mainly because he uses them to his advantage, Phil reckons these features enhance the game – other more honest players are a bit dubious about this!

Reckon you could do better? Well, Robin 'Boyo' Hogg has been practising his skills on Hewson's *Insects In Space* (from their Sizzling C64 *Fourth Dimension* compilation), ready to take on a worthy challenger. If you're chosen you get to visit Ludlow (a unforgettable experience) and, win or lose, you'll get some great prizes and have your picture taken by one of the world's leading photographers (or if he's not available, Cameron).

I CHALLENGE THE WELSH SWINE!

My laser-firing eyes are so hot I reckon I could fry the Welshman's bacon and make him look like a real ham-ateur.

Name ....

Address ....

....

....

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Tel. ....

My best score is ....

SIZZLER

Hammerfist

Vivid Image/Activision, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk; Amiga £24.99

A / 64

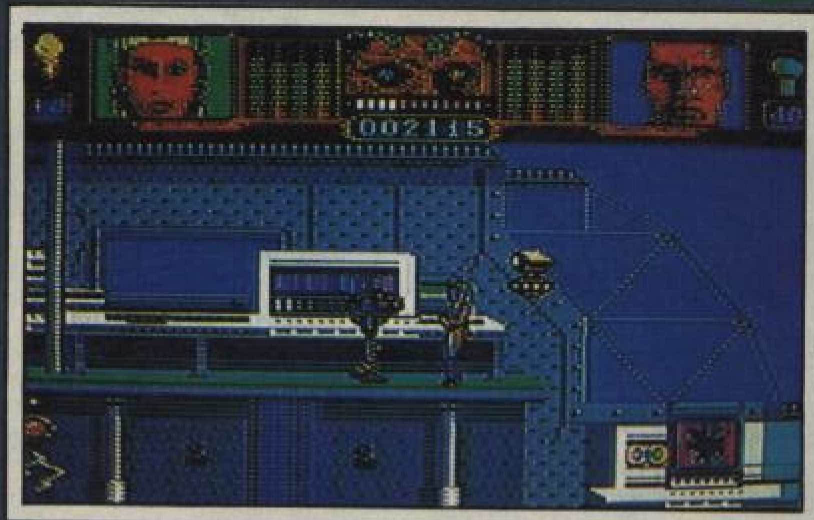
●A man and a woman fuse to create arcade ecstasy!

Today's holograms are feeble, flickering illusions, monochromatic and insubstantial. But in the future these three-dimensional phantasms have been transformed into flesh and blood by the Centro-Holographix corporation, which uses personality matrices of people to create exact duplicates. Using these bizarre creations the company has taken control of Earth's two major post-apocalypse cities.

The latest two holographs are the male leader of a Firearms Suppression Tactics unit (FIST), codenamed Hammerfist, and a female, East European assassin now known as Metalisis. While being held in stasis pens, a computer malfunction fused the two holograms into one. This isn't as messy as it sounds, since it means they both inhabit the same body which can take the form of Metalisis or Hammerfist as they wish. What's more their psychopathic instincts seem to have been cured . . .

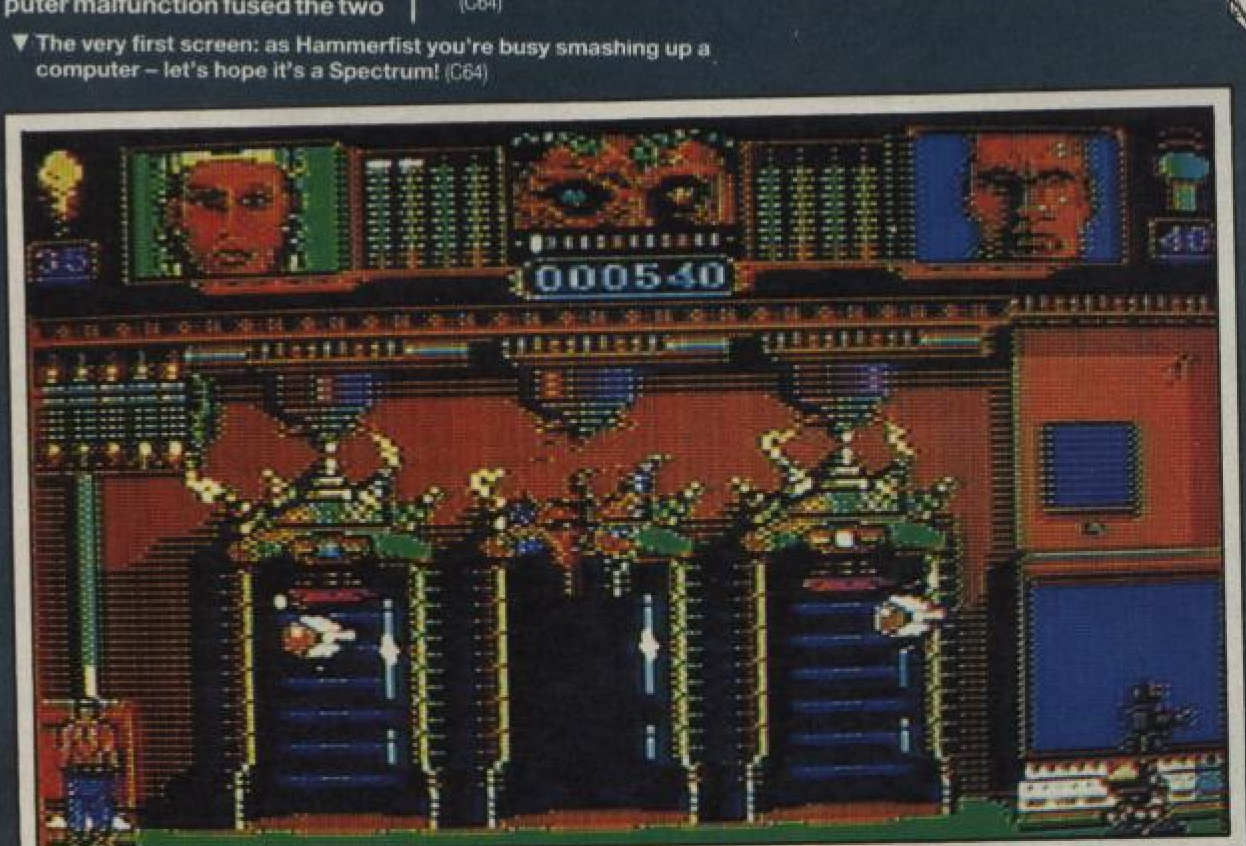
Nevertheless, spending their lives inside a single body holds little appeal for them. C-H's latest assassins have turned against it, and plan to destroy the corporation's brain – The Master. If anyone can do it, they can. Hammerfist is named after his cybernetic hammer-shaped fist, which packs a powerful punch. But even more powerful is his piston-fist, a limited energy unit which can pulverise almost anything. And for long-range targets he carries a laser gun (again a limited number of shots). Metalisis carries no weapons, but can perform a lethal high kick and headbutt. She's also more agile and faster than Hammerfist.

When baddies are killed they sometimes leave orbs which give extra units for the powerfist, laser, or increase one or both character's life force. But if



▲ The underwater city: Metalisis is about to kick a droid in the nuts! (C64)

▼ The very first screen: as Hammerfist you're busy smashing up a computer – let's hope it's a Spectrum! (C64)





One thing that *Hammerfist* has going for it right from the start is a superb attention to detail, and it's not all graphical either. The game is simply alive with activity with masses of variety in the foes. And as each screen contains its own particular problems, together they make for one busy game.

Amiga owners are in for a treat with the sparkling graphics, background effects, and a total of four moody Wally Beben tunes. The level of detail in each character (be it friend or foe) is pretty amazing with no limit on the colour. And on top of the graphics there's the solid blasting action (or should that be piston-pumping action?). Ultimately a little unsophisticated perhaps but you've got to persevere with this one if only to see the superb visuals.



you don't get the orbs in time, they disintegrate, building up The Master's power (a bar at the top, centre of the screen): if this reaches full, whenever a baddie dies it leaves an energy-sapping skull. Besides orbs, energy can be restored by powerpoints scattered through the complex. They make the holograms glow when they plug in, but watch out – too much and they blow up!

The Hammerfist team begins its quest in an undersea city, a single load on the Amiga, split into two on the C64 with the latter including the entertainment, or Pleasure Dome sector. This half of the game ends when the team beats a massive sea monster.

The second half begins with the team entering caves, searching for an air shaft which will take them to the surface if they can beat a massive, mutant ant. The final C64 load is a city in a ruined wasteland. The Centro-Holographix complex is here with the defeat of The Master as the final objective . . .

Hammerfist has just 32 screens in all, but this isn't due to any laziness on the programmers' part. Instead they've tried to make each and every screen virtually a sub-game in its own right. To exit any screen you must destroy everything on it, making completing the whole game a formidable task. And for those who manage it, Vivid Image have already started planning the sequel!



▲ Two human guards approach Hammerfist. (C64)



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Robin may well have gone overboard about the Amiga version but the 64 version is the better for gameplay and all round value, Platform action is a little simple for 16-bitters; the graphics and general presentation of the Amiga version do a great job of masking the 8-bit gameplay (in a way *Ghostbusters 2* never did). *Hammerfist* is much more at home on the 64, with high levels of detail, shading, and everything that the Amiga version has when it comes to gameplay and challenge. The main sprites are well constructed with Metalisis boasting a well animated flip and attack moves. The emphasis on all out beat-'em-up action makes for a light game with an underlying strategy in completing each screen and series of screens.

64

PRESENTATION 86%
Two loads, contimue on second section when all lives lost, high score table, music or FX option.

GRAPHICS 91%
Good use of colour, great attention to detail, plenty of variety, and brilliantly animated main sprites.

SOUND 85%
Good Wally Beben music can be swapped for nice spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 90%
Very easy to have fun simply bashing things up . . .

LASTABILITY 89%
. . . but with such a huge variety of baddies and some simple puzzles there's plenty to keep you occupied for quite some time.

OVERALL 90%

A brilliantly executed arcade-adventure, packed with graphical variety.

amiga

PRESENTATION 90%
Nice attract mode and choice of FX and four tunes.

GRAPHICS 94%
Static shots do them no justice at all; you have to see the superb animation to appreciate them.

SOUND 92%
Four very good tunes and powerful sound effects.

HOOKABILITY 90%
The bash-'em-up action is immediately addictive . . .

LASTABILITY 88%
. . . but after a few screens further progress requires some tactical thinking and pure arcade skill. Could've had more screens than the C64 for £25 though.

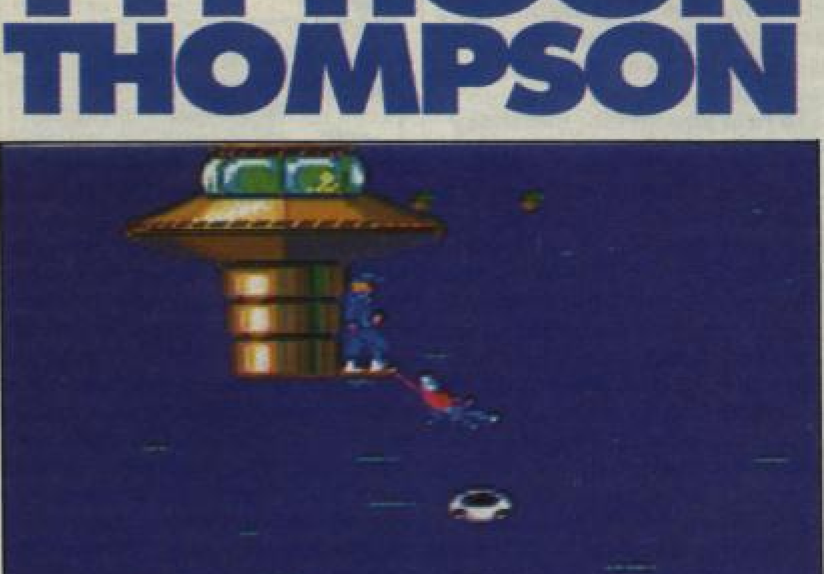
OVERALL 90%

A spectacular beat-'em-up which plays and looks like a top-notch coin-op.


Pipe Mania!!
ADDICTION BEYOND
C and VG Feb 1990 94%
Pipe Mania is "a classic puzzle arcade game that is so addictive,
Pipe Mania is a game of great ingenuity, simple in concept and
You'll need to act instinctively, but think strategically!
One wrong move, one brief hesitation or mis-placed pipe section
drown in a sea of slime!
ST Action
"Pipe Mania is a conceptually simple and cheeky game which is incredibly addictive"
Commodore User Screenstar
"Terrifically addictive... outlasts any arcade conversion"
AVAILABLE FOR
Commodore Amiga
IBM PC and Compatibles
Commodore 64 Cassette
Commodore 64 Disk
Zero March 1990
"Buy this
never sleep again"
The Games Machine Star Player Award 83%
"A puzzle game of great ingenuity and addictivity, Pipe Mania is simple in concept, fiendishly challenging in play, and attractive to look at"
Amiga Computing Excellence Award 95%
"A game with a game play that shines"
Game Players Award USA
"Best PC strategy game of 1989"
C+VG HIT!
AMIGA FORMAT GOLD
THE One
ATARI ST AMIGA PC
FOR 16-BIT GAMES
STAR PLAYER
GAME Players
GAME OF THE YEAR
EMPIRE
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ZZAP! TEST

TYPHOON THOMPSON



Domark/Broderbund, Amiga £19.99

Sea sprites are the cutest things in the known universe. Living on groups of tiny islands on the planet Aguar, they're yellow furry things which can swim like dolphins – and turn bright red with popping eyeballs when they're angry. What's more they're incredibly possessive little varmints, so when Flight 396 goes down over the planet we know we've got trouble. The only survivor of the crash is a human child.

As the incredibly famous Typhoon Thompson you're dropped on Aguar in your Jet-Sled. After visiting the Spirit Guardians (who give you an extra life and three extra Jet–Sleds) you set off to find the first of four magical artifacts which need to be collected before you can rescue the infant. Each artifact is lovingly stored in a Treasury Dome located at the centre of an island village. To get the object you must first kidnap all the sprites in the village.

To lure a Sprite out, you merely need to blast its home (there are six per village) with your laser cannon. The enraged Sprite will then leap into its Flyer and come zooming after you. Flyers range from Bumpers (which merely push you around) to Suckers (which love eating Jet-Sleds) and Zappers (which blast both Sled and you to atoms!). Shoot a Flyer and a dazed Sprite will fall into the ocean, utterly helpless for a short while so you can scoop it up into your sack. Take too long though, and it'll start swimming back home.

On higher levels there are up to three Sprites in each island home, and if you let just one get home three are restored to that island! Fortunately on the more advanced missions you're given additional weapons, such as Freeze and Scatter Bombs.

Once you've collected all the Sprites you must go to the Treasure Dome in the hope of swapping them for the magical artifact.



I'll get the bad news out of the way first and say that *Typhoon Thompson* is a little easy to get through but then some people find it tough (Plug of the Month: see my tips on it in this very issue!). On the positive side it's such a rewarding and utterly charming game to play with a fabulous ending that this 'fault' can be forgiven. As expected, programmer Dan Gorlin's eye for superlative character detail is shown off to the full with this fun game. The animation of the Treasurer Sprite getting angry never fails to draw a smile whenever I see it. If anything, the tune is a little slow paced but works well in its own simple way – the stereo effect is great through a Hi-Fi. I hope this is just the first of a series of 'Typhoon' games.



Typhoon features the kind of cuteness that usually has me reaching for the sick bag, but it's all so incredibly well done even I was taken aback. The quality of the animation on the tiny sprites matches anything seen in *Space Ace*, minus the tedious disk accessing, plus a superb game. Zooming around in the Jet-Sled and blasting the cutesy Sprite critters is great fun, while the various types of Flyers all present their own challenge.

PRESENTATION 96%
Entertaining intro, good demo, and excellent inter-level sequences.

GRAPHICS 95%
Beautiful animation, superlative seascapes and Sprites.

SOUND 80%
Okay title tune and some excellent spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 91%
Takes a short while to get into, but soon becomes incredibly addictive and really enjoyable.

LASTABILITY 83%
Five islands don't provide an immense challenge, but superb characters and gameplay keep you coming back.

OVERALL 88%
A classic arcade game with some great humour.

REMEMBER THE GAME IS WORTH £2.99 AND IS YOURS FREE. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS PAY 75p POSTAGE, PACKING AND HANDLING. I ENCLOSE CHEQUE/PO FOR 75p. PLEASE SEND ME MY FREE GAME!

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

....

....

POSTCODE ....

IMPORTANT: REMEMBER TO FILL IN REVERSE OF COUPON



LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

SPECTRUM.
48K: Rewind the tape to the beginning of Side A. Type LOAD"" an press ENTER. The game should load automatically. Please follov all on screen prompts.

128K: Rewind the tape to the beginning of Side B. Select th LOADER option from the menu. The game should loa automatically. Please follow all on screen prompts.

AMSTRAD CPC.
CPC 464: Rewind the tape to the beginning of either side. Ho down CTRL and tap the small ENTER key. The game should loa automatically. Please follow all on screen prompts.

CPC 664 or 6128: Rewind the tape to the beginning of either sid Type I (Shifted@) TAPE (ENTER), then type RUN" (ENTER). The gam should load automatically. Please follow all on screen prompts.

COMMODORE C64/128.
C64: Rewind the tape to the beginning of either side. Hold dow SHIFT and tap the small RUN/STOP key. The game should loa automatically. Please follow all on screen prompts.

C128: Rewind the tape to the beginning of either side. Ensure th machine is in 64K mode. Hold down SHIFT and tap the sma RUN/STOP key. The game should load automatically. Please follo all on screen prompts.

THE GAME

In each district of the city you must wipe out your daily quota of gan members. Once these henchmen have been eliminated you mu tackle the head dealer before going on to the next, more dangerou area.

To operate your Uzi machine pistol use the directional controls move the cross-hair and press the fire key to activate the trigge

Your energy will be depleted if you are shot, or if innocent civilia get caught in the crossfire.

Extra ammunition, first aid, and body armour may be liberated fro the gang members you elimiate.

CONTROLS
Spectrum and Amstrad users may use a joystick or redefined key C64 owners must use a joystick connected in port 2.

ZZAP! TEST

Hello!

64

PRO TENNIS TOUR

Ubi Soft, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk

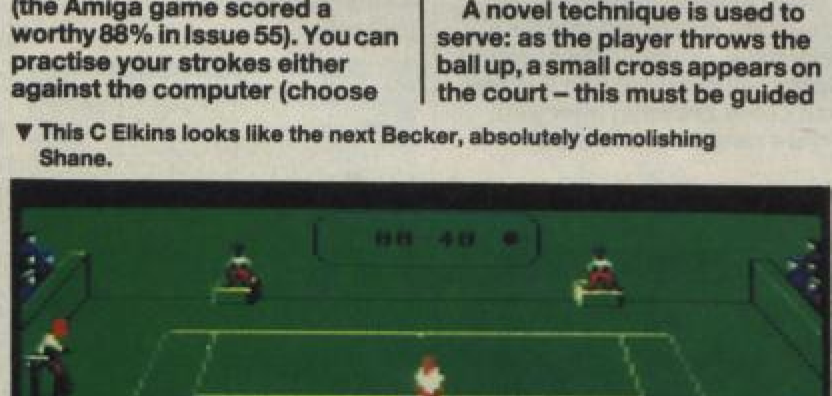
At last, C64 owners can abuse their rackets in the privacy of their own home (the Amiga game scored a worthy 88% in Issue 55). You can practise your strokes either against the computer (choose from three skill levels) or a friend on the 3-D court viewed from the usual TV angle.

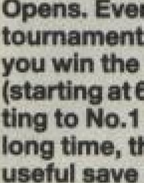
A novel technique is used to serve: as the player throws the ball up, a small cross appears on the court – this must be guided into the relevant service box. To return the ball you must position your player and accurately time your swing.

To help you master this tricky technique, there are a variety of practice options. The training machine can throw balls at you in six different patterns, and there's another option to practise serving.

When you're ready, you can take on computer players of various ability in the four major international tennis tournaments: Wimbledon and the Australian, French, and US Opens. Even if you don't win a tournament, the more matches you win the higher your ranking (starting at 64th) will get. As getting to No.1 is likely to take a long time, the game includes a useful save facility.

▼ This C Elkins looks like the next Becker, absolutely demolishing Shane.





Another silly sport if you ask me: knocking balls over a net with a piece of wood with string tied across it. But if you've got a fetish for that sort of thing, *Pro Tennis Tour* is your pot of yoghurt. Originally called *Great Courts* (a strange translation from the French), Ubi Soft's tennis sim is just as good as it was on the Amiga with almost identical fast-paced action. The only things missing are the strawberries and cream, but who needs them when you've got an economy bottle of Big Dom?



This is a really good conversion (by British programmers ESP), retaining the Amiga game's simple playability and featuring some very good, large player sprites. The game plays almost identically to the original with a high speed of play that makes hitting the ball a difficult task at first. One slight annoyance is that the player sometimes performs a backhand shot when you want a forehand (and vice versa), but this is a minor niggle. With the short-term playability of the two-player game plus the long-term interest provided by world tournaments, *Pro Tennis Tour* must be the top-seeded tennis sim.

PRESENTATION 87%
A good range of practice and play options. Useful save game facility.

GRAPHICS 80%
The large sprites are very well animated.

SOUND 76%
Okay title tune, sparse but informative in-game FX.

HOOKABILITY 83%
Difficult to master at first but very playable in two-player mode.

LASTABILITY 81%
A variety of tough computer opponents should keep you playing.

OVERALL 82%

A very pro-fressional pro-duct.

T.V. SPORTS BASKETBALL

A

Cinemaware/Mirrorsoft, Amiga £29.99

From humble beginnings basketball has developed into a modern sport with highly paid professionals playing in America's NBA Championship. Cinemaware, however, have their own league: the CWBA, with 28 teams (any of which can be human or computer controlled) competing in four divisions. Teams may be edited to change players' abilities and names.

In exhibition (friendly) matches, up to four players can compete (using a special joystick adaptor available from Microdeal), either on the same side or two against two. There are also options for the number of players in a team (2-5) and the length of the quarters (3-12 minutes – realtime).

All games start with the 'tip off'. Two players stand either side of the ref as he throws up the ball, and jump up in an attempt to knock it towards another player on their side.

The substitution screen then appears, allowing you to replace tired players with fresh men off the bench (substitution is unlimited) as well as changing their positions and choosing which opposing players they mark.

This screen can be called up during play by taking a time out.

There are two ways of playing for your chosen team: you can either switch between the players at will, or play the role of just one chosen player.

The player in possession dribbles automatically. Passing is achieved by pressing fire; the ball is aimed towards the nearest player in the relevant direction. To aid passing, the most open player is indicated by a circle, the colour of which indicates the risk of the ball being stolen by the opposition.

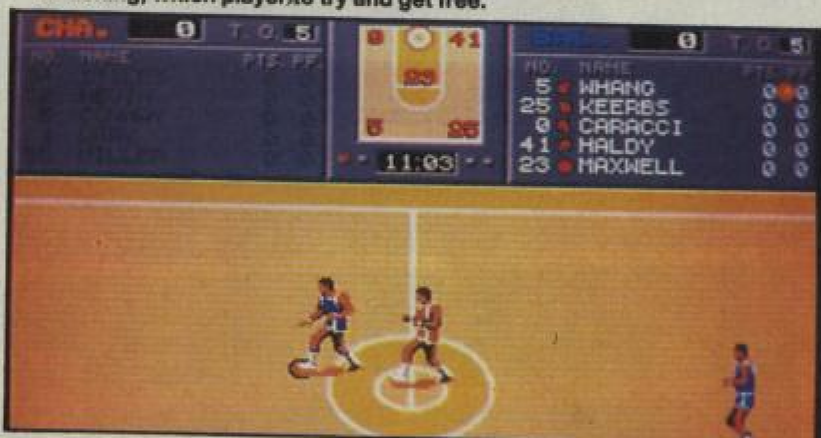
Hold down the fire button and the player jumps up, shooting at the basket when fire is released – shoot at the top of the jump for the optimum chance of scoring. Shots can be blocked by jumping opposing players. But with both offence and defence, care must be taken not to make illegal contact with an opponent. As well as giving away free throws, the offending player could be eliminated from the game if he commits too many fouls.

Direct control of players is only possible at the two ends of the court. When players are crossing mid-court the playcalling screen appears, allowing the offensive team to select a player to try to get open in the subsequent attack. Simultaneously, the defensive team can choose an opposing player to guard more closely.

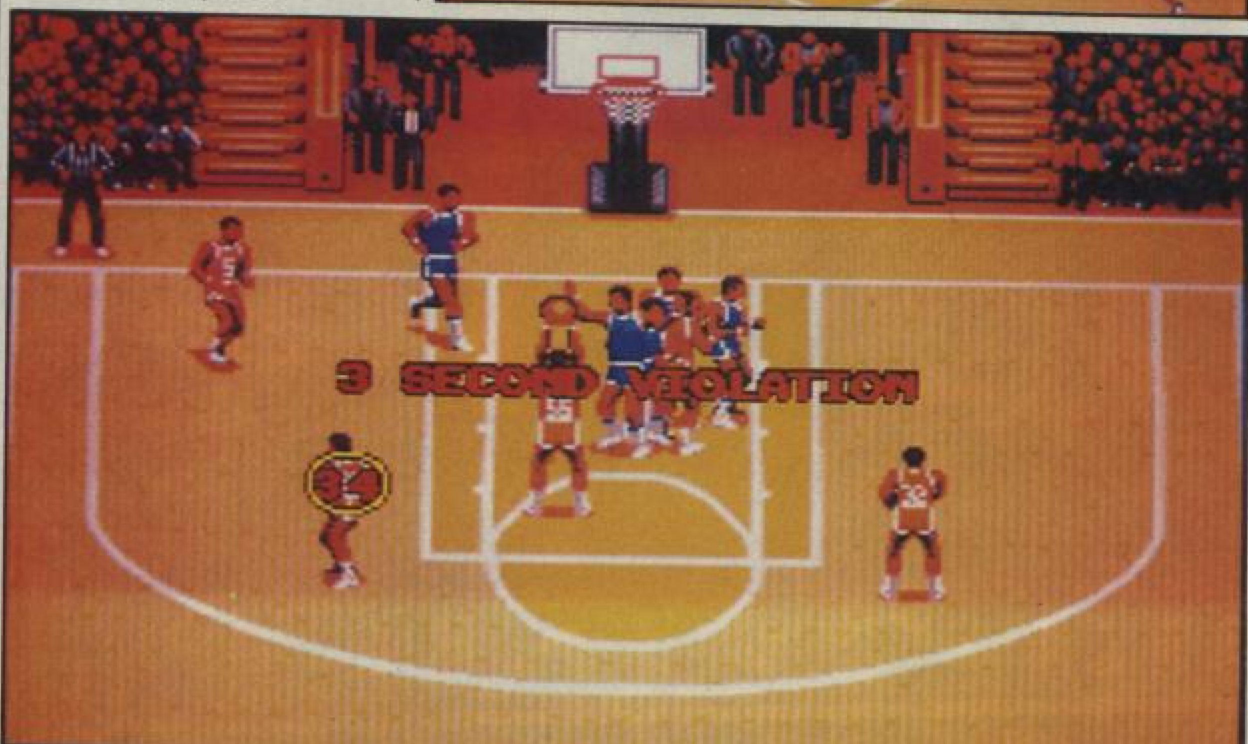


I was slightly doubtful whether the end-to-end sport of basketball would suit Cinemaware's more strategic sports sim style. But although the action is somewhat slow paced, this is a very faithful conversion of the sport. The short game is fun, but it's only in full-length matches that the strong strategic aspects of marking and substitution truly come into effect. The prospect of playing at least 24 league games may seem daunting but, with detailed player statistics and a variety of computer teams (with different styles of play), there's tremendous long-term interest for any serious sports sim addict.

▼ Mr Whang has the ball and while he runs across the mid-court you can decide which player to concentrate marking on or, if attacking, which player to try and get free.



▼ If the attacking side stays in the 'key' (the dark yellow zone) for more than 3 seconds possession passes to the other side. Also, player 34's number's turned red so he's risky to pass to.





Cinemaware's presentation is as ever excellent with good pre/post-match sequences and disk access occurring only for half-time statistics. In-game graphics are attractive, but the characters are big and it's hard to judge their exact position in relation to other players – this is irritating as the slightest defensive error soon results in a goal. This leaves tactics, which are vitally important – changing who marks who can have a critical effect on the game. In full-length games fatigue and substitutions add extra depth, but it's a long time to be playing. What's more all League matches have to be the full length – which could deter the less committed player.

Fans of basketball, and the *TV Sports* style will undoubtedly welcome this release, but the lack of broad appeal makes it a bit pricey for beings less wealthy than myself.

64

A 64 version is planned.

update

PRESENTATION 90%
Slick 'network broadcast' presentation, minimal disk accessing. Detailed player/team stats.

GRAPHICS 86%
Detailed players of different heights, but it's sometimes difficult to judge their exact position.

SOUND 78%
Okay tune, fairly sparse spot effects. Extra FX on 1Mb machines.

HOOKABILITY 82%
The more strategic gameplay takes a while to appreciate.

LASTABILITY 88%
A massive challenge which fans will love but others might find a bit daunting.

OVERALL 86%
Another slick Cinemaware sports sim.

ZZAP! TEST

SIZZLER

NINJA SPIRITS

C64

This is one fast and furious game with enemies zooming onto the screen from all angles – I haven't had so much thrown at me since I was booed off stage at the school nativity play! And it isn't just their huge quantity that makes the nasties dangerous. They behave very intelligently, homing in on you and accurately firing bullets and swinging their swords. Indeed, when I played an early version of *Ninja Spirits* I thought it was *too* tough, so thankfully the finished version is slightly tamer, and a lot more playable as a result. That's not to say it's easy, however, as at times it's hard to think quickly enough with so many enemies attacking from all sides.

Graphically the game is a bit of a mixed bag. The scenery's a bit basic in places but the enemy sprites, although small, more than make up for this with superb animation as they leap about, swinging their swords realistically. And their speed is amazing considering there's always so much happening on screen.

I know the subject matter's a bit jaded but, all in all, I rate this the most playable ninja game to date. Another top-notch conversion by the inimitable Chris Butler.





▲ Leaping up the vertical cliff face and under heavy attack.

Activision, C64 £9.99 cassette, £14.99 disk.

● Ninja know-how from Chris Butler

After the defeat of so many demons by superfast ninjas, you'd think they'd learn their lesson and reform. I mean think of the cash a demon could make using his hordes of minions to do repetitive tasks, like building TVs, hifis, and even Nintendos!

But no, the Last Warlock isn't interested in your cash, he wants your soul and his evil reign is terrorising another obscure Japanese province. The only one who can save the disaster-prone Japanese people this time is Tsukikage, the spirit of the white wolf. He has taken the form of a ninja and embarks on a dramatic quest through six lands, slaying zillions of minions and plenty of huge super-monsters such as a Flying Kiteman, giant swordman, and massive evil buddha.

The legendary adventure begins in a decaying temple, with evil ninjas crouching on platforms above the ground and hurling bottles of poison gas. There's also plenty of sword-wielding friends to rush Tsukikage. Besides the inevitable, razor-sharp samurai sword our hero is armed with ninja death-stars (or shuriken), dynamite, and lassoon blades – swirling blades on a chain which can be thrown to deadly effect. Tsk – as he's known to his friends – can also make use of crystals dropped by dying ninjas to get ninja spirits (which copy his every lethal move), triple the number of death stars thrown, envelope the sword in a lethal energy field,

▼ Fighting through level one's superb ruined temple!





▲ The final level and you're at the top of the screen, trapped between a leaping ninja and a stick-swirling flying old man. The pretty blue fireworks are lethal too!



◀ The marshes: Tsk shows off the incredible lassoon blades on their lengthy chain.



Apparently Chris Butler took on *Powerdrift* purely because he wanted to get his hands on this Irem coin-op, which is very much in the style of his superb *Ghosts 'N' Goblins* conversion. Technically this is quite impressive, with an amazing amount of ninjas and death stars bouncing around the screen. The way the game switches from horizontal to vertical scrolling is pretty slick as well. The graphics are a bit of hotch potch: the sprites are great but level two is very disappointing for its sparse backgrounds. Level three compensates though, with some superbly shaded trees and baddies.

To some extent I think Chris was handicapped by the original coin-op, which isn't in the same league as *Ghouls 'N' Ghosts*, but his formidable talents have not only produced a great conversion, but a really good C64 game. Some people, myself included, might find the extremely hectic pace and tough difficulty level initially a bit off-putting, it doesn't just let up! This is the hardest game I've played this issue, and while this might seem unfair it's a part of it that forces you to learn those patterns. Persistence reveals some fine gameplay, the multiple ninjas work well and if you want a real arcade test this fits the bill.

and more besides.

All these, and plenty of skill will be needed on later levels, which include a haunted forest, spirit-infested marshes, a massive warehouse with a trapdoor which takes you underground, a vertical cliff face with ninjas lurking in every nook and cranny, as well as caves where ancient old men with twirling sticks leap into the air to make hair-raising attacks.



Why everyone has to make games about short little oriental guys with shiny swords rather than massive, death-dealing alien dictators such as myself is a bit odd – and usually boring with so many crowding the shelves. But *Ninja Spirit* is different. The original Irem coin-op showed some welcome imagination in equipping Tsk with a fair few weapons, allowing you to slice-'n'-dice your opponents in a pleasingly varied number of ways. There's also plenty of different backgrounds, from the ruined temple – with its superbly detailed statues – to the spooky forest and demanding vertical cliff face. After the incredible tedium of ninjas stomping around New York City – where in reality they'd never last more than a minute against the machine-gun wielding gangs and police – it's a welcome change to find them in their proper place, the beautiful landscapes of Japan's mythical past. This all combines to provide a great atmosphere.

The actual gameplay isn't as varied as *Ghouls 'N' Ghosts*, but the variety of weapons, various vertically-scrolling sections and plenty of different enemies provide much more than the average ninja slash-'em-up. What's more Chris '*Powerdrift*' Butler has worked wonders in converting the game. The imagination in the backgrounds has, on the whole, been very well replicated but it's the sprites which really shine. The way enemy ninja run on, draw their swords then try and lop off your head is great fun. Ninjas armed with rifles crouch, take aim then fire. They may be small, but the enemy sprites constantly impressed me with their excellent animation. In my firm opinion, although the Welshmen would disagree, the graphics are much better than *Ghouls* due to their surprising realism.

There's no hiding the fact *Ninja Spirit* is tough, and not brilliantly original, but its plenty of fun executed with great panache. Heartily recommended.

amiga

The Amiga version should be reviewed next month!

update

PRESENTATION 83%
Four loads, but continue plays help compensate for toughness.

GRAPHICS 90%
Some intricately detailed backgrounds and – most especially – brilliantly animated sprites create a first-rate atmosphere. End-of-level monsters and vertically-scrolling sections are great too.

SOUND 83%
Pleasant tune and good FX.

HOOKABILITY 91%
Two levels in the first load, relatively easy beginning makes it instantly addictive . . .

LASTABILITY 90%
Some fearsome later levels rival *Ghouls 'N' Ghosts* for toughness!

OVERALL 90%

A tough, but very addictive slash-'em-up!

ZZAP! TEST

COLORADO

A

Palace/Silmaril, Amiga £24.95

Old age is bad enough with rickety joints, wrinkly skin, and not being able to hear the TV properly, but the Red Indians had a sure way of making it worse. According to Silmaril they used to take their old folk out into enemy territory, tie them to a stake, and leave them so they could die the 'death of a warrior'! Makes your average, gestapo-run OAP home seem quite charming, doesn't it?

You discover this strange custom when trapping beavers in 1880 USA. Stumbling across a group of Indians you shoot them all, except for an old man who promises to give you a treasure map if you give him a proper ritual death. You oblige and start the game searching for a lost gold mine in a flickscreen arcade adventure of 100-plus screens.

Besides moving left/right and into the screen, you can also swap between having bare hands or holding weapons such as a musket, axe, and knife. You can also use, or if appropriate read, any special objects you might find via the function keys. In addition, if you find Mac Biggle the storekeeper you can barter anything you might find for the various items he has. You cannot save at will, but only at special locations.

Besides the core beat-'em-up, arcade-adventuring action there's an impressive canoeing section. To get to various locations you can jump in the canoe to zoom down the Mississippi river. But watch out for logs, rocks, and boulder-throwing and canoeing Injuns who'll try and stop you reaching dry land.

▼ The canoeing scene: an Indian's just thrown a boulder at you.



▼ Useful equipment can be bought from Mac Biggle's travelling store.





Takes me back this one, what with all those flickscreen rooms, beat-'em-up action and working out which object to use where. It's an arcade-adventure in the classic format, with the addition of a top-notch canoeing section, 16-bit graphics, and sporadic sampled spot FX. Joystick response is a tiny bit slow, but once you begin exploring you soon remember what made all those aardvarks (as we used to call them) so popular. Fun to play with plenty to do and see, this is well worth a look.



Despite having a rather over-familiar game style, *Colorado* is very well executed. The graphical detail is a source of constant surprise – the way you reload your musket, the bird-like souls of killed Indians, and such baddies as the bear are all very impressive. This certainly contributes to the urge to explore, while combat is really quite good and the canoeing section works much better than *Chase HQ*'s 3-D effect.

64

No plans for a 64 version.

update

PRESENTATION 78%
Good save/load option using game disk. Fairly frequent in-game disk accessing a tiny bit irritating.

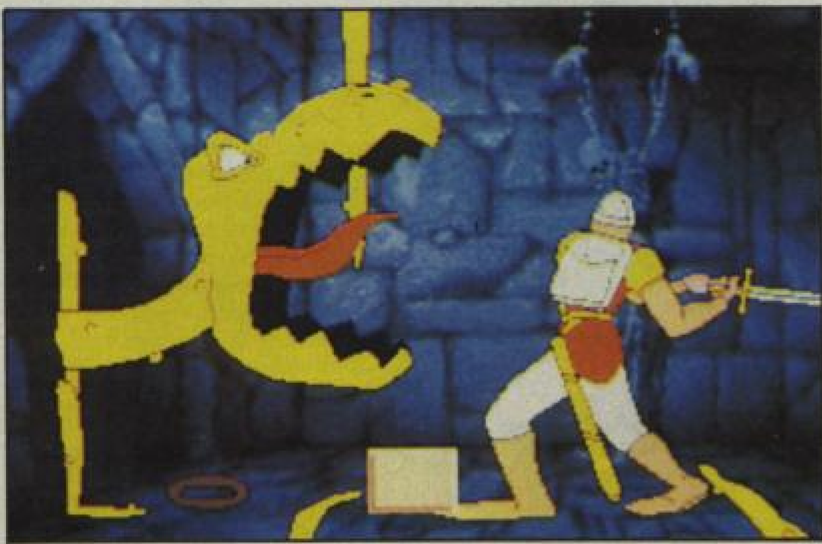
GRAPHICS 80%
Lots of variety and detail, with a very good canoeing section.

SOUND 71%
Mediocre intro tunes, in-game sound restricted to okay sampled spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 74%
The urge to explore is strong with quite a few different routes to take and baddies to kill.

LASTABILITY 81%
Plenty of exploring to do, some good combat scenes, and an impressive canoe scene.

OVERALL 79%
A very enjoyable aardvark!



▲ A door knocker strikes back!

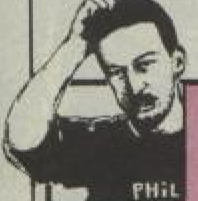
DRAGON'S LAIR:
ESCAPE FROM SINGE'S CASTLE

Empire, Amiga £44.95

Dirk the Daring's last Amiga appearance saw him half way through his brave quest to rescue Princess Daphne. Now the second half of the *Dragon's Lair* coin-op has been coded and you can finish the task. The game begins with you deep in Singe's castle; the hideous dragon has hidden Daphne deep in the Castle's catacombs. Watching over her are a whole host of monsters, traps and – worst of all – the Evil Shapeshifter.

While *Escape* is the prequel to *Space Ace* (58%, Issue 59), it's the most recent to be converted and has many advances over *Ace*. Due to the spectacular set-piece graphics the main character still has a limited number of actions per scene, eg 'jump left and fire' to be performed at just the right moments. There's only one way to do things – mistime your actions and you lose a life. But unlike *Ace* there's a 'Helper' option where arrows appear on screen showing you what moves to make (until you get near the end). These moves are not always the same and can change from game to game. There's also a 'Flipping' option, which improves lastability by forcing you to play most rooms twice, their order random with many shown mirrored. There are also three difficulty levels; 'easy' meaning there are less scenes to beat. Even more impressive, *Dragon's Lair Part 1* can be linked to its sequel so you can play the whole coin-op – complete with 'Helper' arrows on the first part, as well!

If you don't have a 1Mb machine you lose sound, and can choose to drop birth/death sequences to save disk accessing. You can still save the game though.



Singe may only contain eleven 'scenes', but most of these include two or more screens and often repeat – as in the labyrinth – to create the impression of a substantial challenge. What's more, rooms can be mirrored (even if you don't choose the 'Flip' option), forcing you to reverse your actions. To begin with, graphics are almost irrelevant; you just watch the arrows. But once you get the hang of it you begin to appreciate the presentation more. The huge cartoon graphics really are superb with an atmospheric soundtrack to match. Overall, *Singe* is a definite improvement over the frustrating *Space Ace*, although juggling five disks is a bind and the £45 price tag is well over the top.



Was it really a mere two issues ago that *Space Ace* had me blowing a circuit over its irritating lack of playability? *Singe* is a massive leap forward, the 'helper' arrows making gameplay more a matter of timing than maddening hit-and-miss experimentation. This gives the game a much more flowing, satisfying feel. As for the graphics, they're as good as you'd expect: fast, imaginative and full of humour! Sound is the ideal accompaniment – plenty of great spot FX. This means there's no less than five disks, and on quite a few scenes death means a brief pause for reloading it, but this really is quite a good game. Still not worth £45 perhaps, but good fun and essential for owners of the original.



64

They're thinking about it!

update

PRESENTATION 90%
Hard drive installation program, option to link in *Lair Part 1*, save option, and much more besides. Apart from inevitable disk swapping, excellent.

GRAPHICS 92%
Big, colourful, very fast, and slick. Lots of variety and imagination.

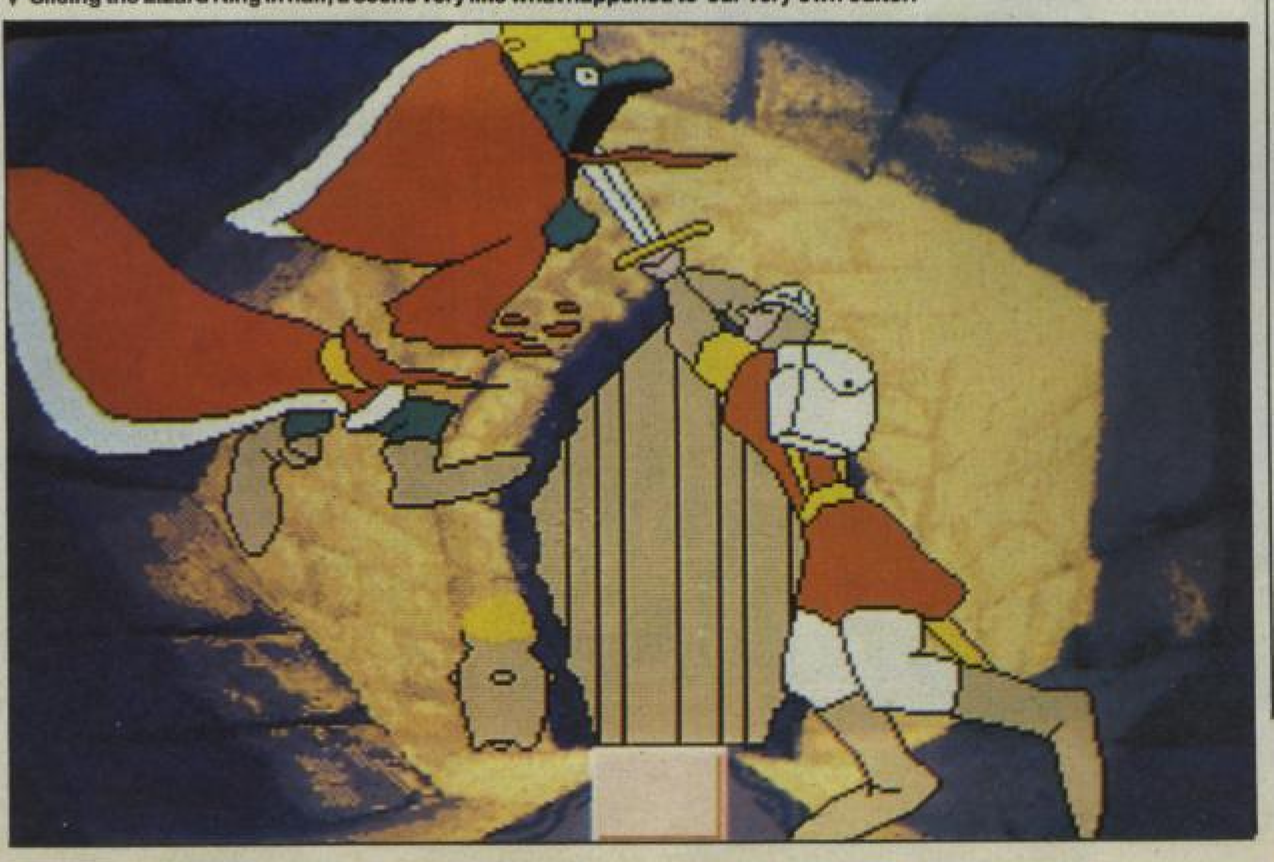
SOUND 85%
Hilarious spot FX, great arcade samples.

HOOKABILITY 76%
Instantly playable.

LASTABILITY 56%
Difficulty levels, option to double number of rooms, and *Part 1* expansion offer some challenge, although a few days intensive play should see it beaten.

OVERALL 71%
Over-priced, but graphics and sonics are great while gameplay is fun.

▼ Slicing the Lizard King in half, a scene very like what happened to our very own editor!



ZZAP! TesT

SIZZLER

PLAYER MANAGER

Anco, Amiga £19.95

●Get paid less for doing two jobs – sounds familiar . . .

Being the manager of a football club is a stressful occupation – it's easy to get laryngitis screaming at dozing players. Some enraged bosses even make regular pitch invasions. You're one such boss, but unlike Cloughie, your place on the pitch is entirely legitimate. As player manager of a Third Division side you can inspire your team to victory by playing alongside them. Do well and you could gain promotion or even win the FA Cup; do badly and the club's board of directors will soon let you know!

If you're starting your very first season, the computer takes a few minutes creating a unique game environment of teams and players which is saved onto a blank disk (also used for saved game positions).

Management menus are accessed with the mouse and include:

Squad: Gives full details of players, including their physical abilities (pace, agility, stamina etc) and skill attributes (passing, shooting, tackling, goalkeeping). Players can be sold by putting them on the transfer list (unhappy players may request a transfer).

Transfer: Here you can buy players on other clubs' transfer lists. After selection of the desired position and price bracket, a suitable list of players is displayed. You can view full details of any player and attempt to buy him by haggling the price with his club.

Club: Includes club records, finances, managerial assessment, and the season's complete fixture list.

Tactics: Here you can create (and save) new team formations, using the tactics designer. A map of the pitch is divided into 12 square sectors. You can determine the target position of each of your players for when the ball is in each of the sectors, as well as for goal kicks and corners. A useful aid in evaluating your formation is the Ray Trace facility which shows how far your players have to run as the ball moves from sector to sector.

Coach: There are three types of training. Squad Training allows you to change the specified position (goalkeeper, defender, midfielder, forward) of a player by retraining him in a new one. Tactical Training allows you to modify one of the team's four formations or replace it with one previously designed with the Tactics option. Extra Training simply improves the squad's performance, but if overused can lead to low morale.

Match Day: Time for the big match. After viewing the opposition's squad, you can pick your team. As well as eleven starting players, two substitutes must also be selected along with your starting formation.

The match itself is a slightly altered version of programmer Dino Dini's arcade footy game, *Kick Off*, with the action taking place on an overhead-view, scrolling pitch. If you're in the selected team, you get to play either in your chosen position or for the whole team, flicking from player to player as they get closest to the ball – this choice can only be made when you start a new game of *Player Manager*. Either of your two subs can be put on at any time and a change of tactics made simultaneously.

If you're in a hurry, you can

▼ The excellent tactics designer screen; the yellow ray-tracing lines show how far the players have to run as the ball moves across the pitch.





This really is an incredibly realistic simulation of every aspect of football. Players behave just like their real life counterparts, becoming unhappy if they don't get to play for a while. Even players' private lives can interfere with their career: they can get killed in a car crash or be arrested on drugs charges! Another realistic aspect is the board of directors who'll stop you from buying a player if they think he's too expensive, and sack you if the team performs badly. As for the match action it's an improvement on *Kick Off* with more intelligent computer players and fewer bugs! And the great news for *Kick Off* fans is that the soon-to-be-released *Kick Off II* will allow you to play two-player games with any of the sides and tactics created in *Player Manager*!





▲ All the forwards available for transfer in the £100–250K price bracket.

I'm overjoyed to say that *Player Manager* has been well worth the anxious months of waiting. The mixture of management and arcade games works very well indeed with the players visibly performing according to their abilities. All the management menus are very easy to use and neatly presented. Rather than just pick your team, there are great coaching and tactics options which can really pay dividends on the pitch. The transfer system is particularly impressive with plenty of players to choose from and a neat bidding system. The match action is an improvement on *Kick Off* with cleverer computer players making for a more skilful game – especially when you're playing in one position. And with the long term interest offered by league and cup competitions you'll never want to hang up your boots.

play an accelerated version of the match (with a static pitch and dots for players) or just get the final result.

Being a player manager is an exciting job, but as your physical fitness wanes with age you may decide to hang up your boots and become a normal manager – complete with 'sick as a parrot' facial expression and hoarse voice!

Football has always seemed to me as yet more proof of the complete idiocy of Mankind – 90 minutes of whacking a leather ball up and down a bit of pitch rivals cricket as the most tedious activity in the known universe. But *Kick Off* was different, offering mind-blurring speed which tested arcade reflexes to the limit. A superb test of fast-action skill and a minimum of complex tactics. Now Dino Dini has miraculously taken the best arcade game of '89, improved it, and added one of the best football management games ever written.

The ability to spend hundreds of thousands on new players, sell off the OAPs (ie P. King), develop your own unique formations, and control substitutions/tactics during matches is great. The burden of keeping your finances in the black and spotting the right players to bring in and who to sack (via in-depth profiles) is very realistic. The core *Kick Off* game is sadly lacking the two-player mode, but compensates with a role-playing option where you control just one player – risking injury and sending offs. Football fans will find this an absolutely essential purchase, but anyone else who appreciates a great arcade game and an in-depth strategy game should enjoy it just as much.





◄ A wealth of info on the players gives *Player Manager* unparalleled realism.

▼ A brilliant goal by T Long puts Reading in the lead.

64

C64 *Player Manager* should make its debut in July and will use a version of *Kick Off II* for its arcade game.

update



PRESENTATION 90%
Attractive, easy-to-use management menus.

GRAPHICS 86%
Initially unimpressive, but extremely fast, clear with some nice detail.

SOUND 63%
Uhm, good spot FX – kicking, whistle, crowd roar – but hardly amazing.

HOOKABILITY 90%
Clear menu system makes it all very easy to get into – and *Kick Off* is still instantly playable.

LASTABILITY 94%
Plenty of depth, fighting your way up from third division to first is a great challenge!

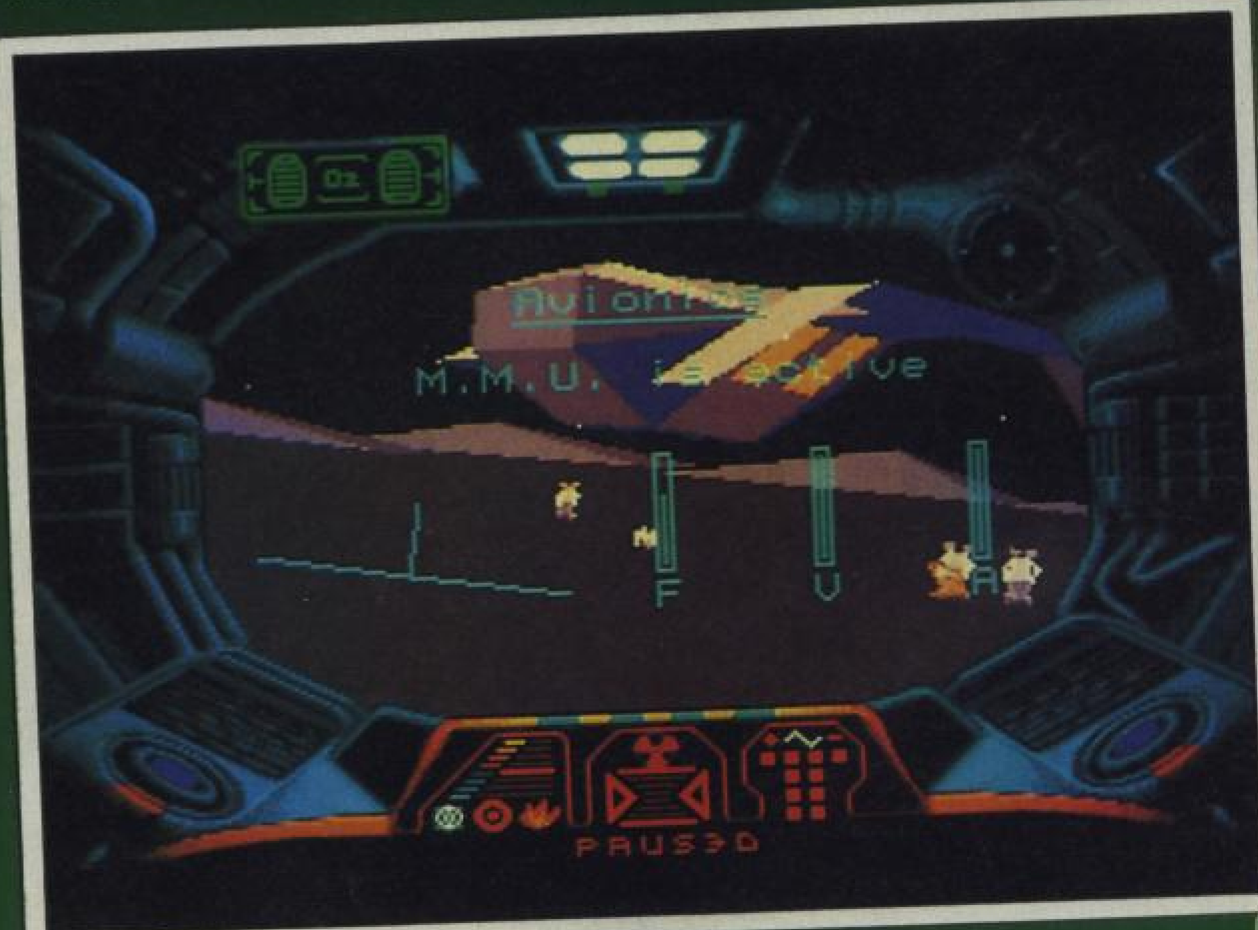
OVERALL 92%

The amazing *Kick Off* is improved and combined with a brilliant management game.

INFESTAT

●Go to work on an alien egg – with cynanide!

▼ Your MMU jetpack has carried you aloft into a near-fatal collision with the beautifully detailed dropship.

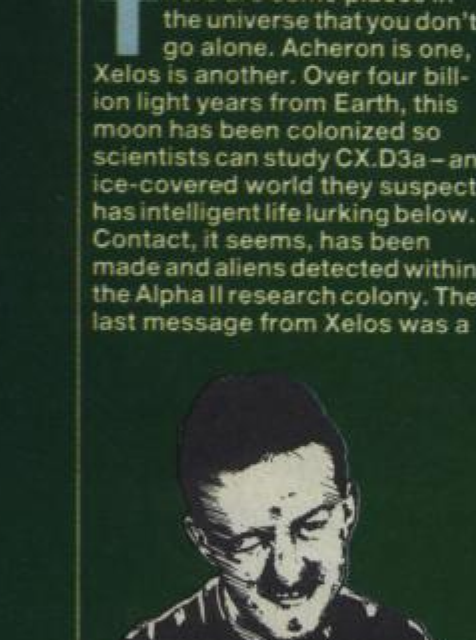


▼Deep in the scientific station you've found the infra-red and HUD gear.



Psygnosis, Amiga £24.95

There are some places in the universe that you don't go alone. Acheron is one, Xelos is another. Over four billion light years from Earth, this moon has been colonized so scientists can study CX.D3a – an ice-covered world they suspect has intelligent life lurking below. Contact, it seems, has been made and aliens detected within the Alpha II research colony. The last message from Xelos was a



Getting into *Infestation* isn't at all easy at first. There are an initially daunting array of displays and options to use. But please don't be put off. Perserverance is rewarded by some of the most atmospheric gameplay ever devised, complemented by a huge variety of excellent solid 3-D graphics. Tension is heightened by the clever 'in-helmet' view and some superb sound – especially the atmospheric breathing effect. There have been many games inspired by the 'Starship Troopers' bug-hunt tension of *Aliens*, including the superb C64 *Project Firestart* and UK *Aliens*. Apart from the dire *Xenophobe*, *Infestation* is the only Amiga game to cover this territory – and it's utterly excellent.

TION

frantic plea for help. Many have been murdered, some by the malfunctioning automatic defence systems, and eggs laid throughout the base . . .

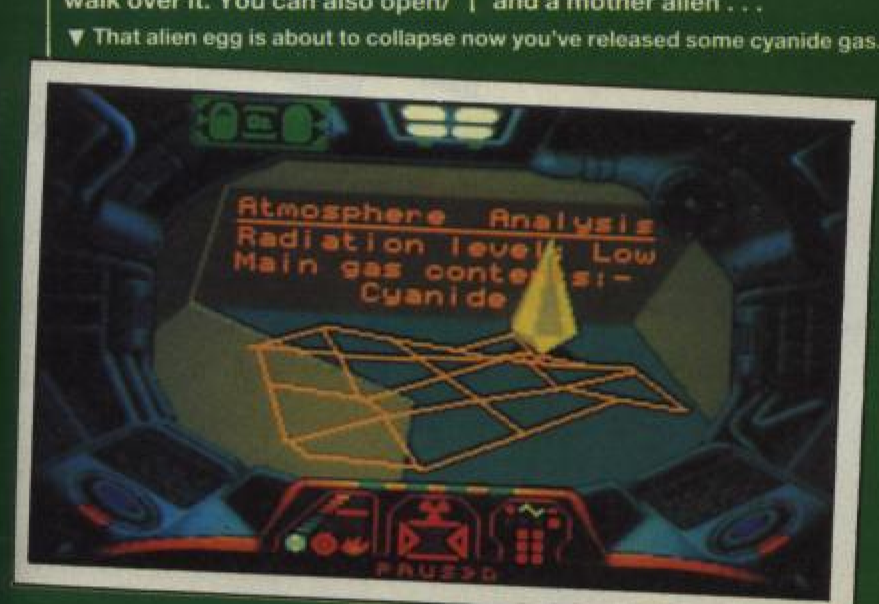
Kal Solar is the hero selected to 'sanitize' Xelos. He must find the 167 eggs one by one, poisoning them with cyanide gas. Then the station's power source has to be found and rigged to self-destruct, leaving just enough time for Kal to escape to the surface.

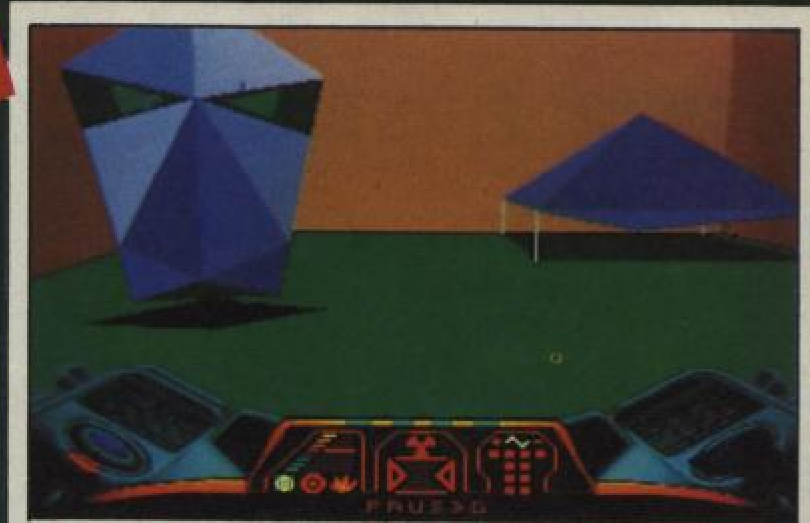
Kal's mission is shown in first-person perspective, with you peering through the visor of his spacesuit helmet. Fast and detailed solid 3-D graphics are used to show the planet's surface, radar stations, and transporters which take you down into the claustrophobic corridors, rooms, and ventilation shafts of the colony. To help you there's plenty of Head-Up–Displays projected on the visor: location/heading display, inventory, life support (heartbeat and food stores), and a scratch pad where you can make notes. There's an avionics HUD, for when you move about using your MMU jetpack, and an atmosphere analysis HUD – you've got limited oxygen, so it's best to take your helmet off when the air is breathable.

There are two ways of moving about: in recon mode, holding down fire will allow you to look up/down and around while moving. In tactical mode pressing fire shoots your laser gun. To pick up an object you simply walk over it. You can also open/ shut doors, use items (such as computers), crouch, and even turn off the suit's power via the function keys. There's also an infra-red option – if you can find the device.

Besides the many bugs which roam Xelo's surface and the eggs below, there's lethal sentry droids, welding droids (which travel in the ventilation ducts), radiation-emitting guardians, and a mother alien . . .

▼ That alien egg is about to collapse now you've released some cyanide gas.





▲ A guardian turns its radiation-spitting eyes on you; death will be quick unless you put your helmet back on.



Danny Gallagher's previous 16-bit game was the attractively presented, but ultimately shallow and somewhat repetitive *Voyager*. So *Infestation* was approached with a little suspicion, even though the graphics are quite superb. The first problem is getting into the Alpha II base, which is initially rather baffling. Close attention to the manual provided some clues however and the logical solution worked perfectly.

Once you're in the base, exploration and tactical thinking soon prove to be vital. Mapping is essential, but thankfully there are terminals where you can call up the blueprints of the level you're on. Copy these down and all you need to do is to find out where the objects are – and how to use them. My favourite graphics so far are the awesome dropship and the shuttles parked in hangars inside the colony. But there's also plenty of thought gone into the gameplay. The way you need to remove your helmet to conserve oxygen, and even shut off the suit power is great. As is the panic when an alien appears, forcing you to arm up. Also good are the HUDs; they're not only attractively presented, but also very useful and realistic.

The best Psygnosis game since *Blood Money*, giving mere humans a glimpse of what it's like to live in a hi-tech helmet!



It's the atmosphere of *Infestation* that brings it to life with the sensations of fear, doubt, and desperation adding to the immensely high tension of the game. Until now I never thought I'd be scared by a computer game but *Infestation* really did set me worrying (even with the lights on late at night, it's still pretty disturbing to play). Danny Gallagher has taken the suspense of the *Alien* movie, multiplied the bug-eyed beasts up to *Aliens* standard, and thrown in some excellent puzzles to create one truly 'horrific' product. Wandering the cold, ominously silent corridors is very much in a *Damocles* vein but then Novagen's game doesn't go all out to scare the player rigid. The idea of exploring the vents is a brilliant touch (even if the vents are graphically very repetitive).

Peeping round corners to look into rooms or opening doors to unexplored regions really gets the old nerves going and the sight of alien eggs undergoing transformation can really see you panic. Having been half frightened to death so far I'm not too sure I *want* to meet the Mother Alien!

64

No plans for a C64 version.

update

PRESENTATION 90%
Attractive poster, great format disk/save game option and good intro live up to Psygnosis's high standards.

GRAPHICS 93%
Superbly atmospheric solid 3-D, with a great helmet and HUD graphics.

SOUND 85%
Weird, but good intro tune, excellent breathing effect which speeds up when you're moving fast and nice spot FX.

HOOKABILITY 93%
A bit hard to get into – but that's part of the appeal, establishing atmosphere and realism with a nice problem to begin with. Excellent underground atmosphere soon leads to compulsive addiction.

LASTABILITY 95%
167 eggs, plus alien queens, a power source to rig for self-destruction and an escape to make mean this isn't going to be completed easily. But the incredible atmosphere will keep you playing until you do.

OVERALL 94%
An utterly compulsive bug-hunt.

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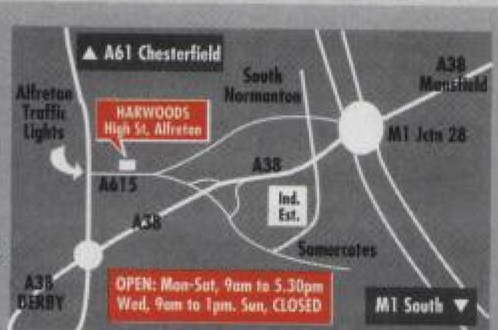


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